

PE
13
.C3
v.3
no.3

Duquesne University:



A NEGLECTED ASPECT OF THE ENGLISH ROMANTIC REVOLT

BY

G. F. RICHARDSON

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Prefatory Remarks	248
I. The Thesis	250
(1) Romanticism: Definitions	250
(2) The Origin of the Romantic Revolt	252
(3) The Theory of Social Change	255
(4) Literature as an Expression of Social Condition	264
II. The Industrial Revolution	268
(1) What it was, and its Economic Effects	268
(2) The Social Consequences of the Revolution	275
III. The Characteristics of the New Literature	290
(1) Exaltation of the Individual	294
(a) Deepened Sentiment	294
(b) Aroused Philanthropic Instinct	301
(c) Dominance of Doctrines of Individualism	308
(2) Excessive Radical Spirit	315
(3) Rebellion against the Commonplace	334
(a) Naturalism	334
(b) Emphasis upon the Remote	341
Supplementary Remarks	349

~~R522~~

PREFATORY REMARKS

While inquiring into the origin of Socialism and its connection with literary history, I was impressed by what seemed to be a remarkable correspondence in time between several historical movements—until I reflected that every age must have the like correspondences. I observed first of all that the great revolution in industry began in the second quarter of the century and culminated about 1820; that the social movement which transformed England from an agricultural nation into a manufacturing nation—from a rural nation, so to speak, into an urban nation—corresponds roughly in dates of beginning and culmination with those of the industrial revolution; that Methodism originated, flourished, and grew independent in the same period; that deism transformed itself into pantheism and atheism; that the doctrine of the rights of man came forward as an active and more or less respectable propaganda, increased in honor, and fought its way to victory within this period of industrial change; and that the rise and triumph of a literary movement falls within the same period. And I had already observed that out of the period emerges Socialism, a lusty and rapidly growing child. Was there, I inquired, a logical and closely knit relation between these various movements? Was there any one of them fundamental, and the prime mover of all the others?

Now, one who undertakes to discover and describe causal relations in human history finds such an array of movements bewildering. And he finds the multiplicity of their interactions further adding to his bewilderment. Movements make their appearance insiduously or with a blare of trumpets; the injection of a new situation or personality may suddenly transform them; they may seem to have disappeared, when in reality they are only comparatively inarticulate. They give rise to other movements, or affect those in existence in various subtle ways. They affect and are affected by time and national spirits.



as they affect and are affected by the qualities of individual geniuses. One movement may be another when viewed from another point of view, or one movement may be partly coincident with another, or one movement may include one or more other movements. It is truly a Ptolemaic system of change, cycle upon epicycle. The investigator who enters upon its labyrinthine mazes may well be modest.

In the pages which follow I make nowhere any very serious attempt to be definitive or exhaustive. I should entertain such an ambition only if I had a minute and detailed knowledge of English literature and its most nearly related literatures in all their historical and esthetic aspects and English history, political, social, and economic, with a fair knowledge of the economic history of the chief countries of Europe; but of such attainments I cannot boast. I shall be content if I have properly emphasized that which is certainly an important and hitherto, apparently, a rather neglected phase of one of the most interesting periods of our literary history.

Except when one is inspired it is a very difficult matter to say anything both original and true about the past of our thoroughly criticised literature. The chief claim to originality in these pages lies in the correlation and elaboration of suggestions from many sources. Some of the thoughts—not, I hope, the most unsound ones—are so far as I know, strictly my own; but by these I set no great store, because I am well aware that my theories and facts may be nullified in their bearing by other possibilities and facts I have overlooked. But every thoughtful man must be convinced that there are logical and close connections between the various movements treated herein—connections that are disregarded in the conventional literary history, and if my attempt should arouse productive effort in someone better qualified to investigate the subject, I shall not have written for naught, whether my conclusions be sound or no.

I. THE THESIS

1. ROMANTICISM: DEFINITIONS

He who undertakes to define the Romantic and Romanticism invites trouble; and he who attempts to talk about them without defining them invites disaster. Since in this study we are concerned only with the period of the Romantic Revolt, I shall try to avoid both trouble and disaster by accepting two widely received *understandings* of what constituted the Romanticism of that period. As applied to the Revolt the term is understood in two senses—a broad and a narrow. This will be explained by an interpretation of the term *Romantic Revolt*. As herein used it covers more than simply the awakening to interest in the medieval and allied subjects kindred in the characteristic of remoteness; it includes both the romantic in this narrower sense, and the naturalistic movement, and, in fact, all those tendencies which resulted in the transformation of the spirit of the Augustan literature into the spirit of the Victorian. To limit it within narrower bounds would lead to the consideration of the progress of only part of the transforming revolutionary movements instead of the progress of all. For the purposes of this study, therefore, Romanticism in its broader sense denotes the dominant characteristics of the literature of the revolt, and will be designated simply as Romanticism; in its narrower sense as signifying the characteristics of that portion of the literature which was concerned only with the *revival of romance*, and whose dominant characteristic was the emphasis of the remote in time and place and spirit, it will be designated generally as *Emphasis upon the Remote*. Here and there it may occur that romanticism in the narrower sense is meant, but the rather awkward expression *emphasis upon the remote* is, for purely literary reasons, not employed. In such cases it is hoped that the context will make evident in what sense the term is used.

Now, although I have avoided giving more than rough working definitions of romanticism, I cannot forbear quarreling with what appears an unwarranted narrowness in the definitions of others. For instance, Mr. Phelps says:

But, though all the above definitions [referring to a summary] of Romanticism make a confusing variety of opinions, we cannot help seeing that there is something in them common to all. Romantic literature will generally be found to show three qualities: Subjectivity, Love of the Picturesque, and a Reactionary Spirit. . . . And by the third is meant that the Romantic movement in any country will always be reactionary to what has immediately preceded; it may be gently and unconsciously reactionary, as in England, or proudly and fiercely rebellious, as in France.^{1, 2}

Now this appears to ignore the fact that many literary movements—that perhaps every literary movement—is actuated in part by a spirit of revolt, and of revolt from what immediately preceded. The pendulum of opinion is ever swinging. The literary world, like the greater world of which it is a part, goes zig-zagging down the “ringing grooves of change,” and in both cases it is the zig-zagging that for the most part is accountable for the ringing of the grooves. The pseudo-classical movement itself was partly a revolt from the tedium and affectation and obscurities of the seventeenth century prose and the inane flights of the Marinistic or “Metaphysical” poets. Apologists for the literature of the eighteenth century do not forget to call attention to the services rendered by the revolt of that century against the seventeenth. It would appear, therefore, that the spirit of revolt is not a distinguishing characteristic of any period. It does not matter whether the spirit is manifested in fierce disdain or in smug superiority; at bottom it is the same. The attitude taken by any literary school toward the school it wishes to supplant, or has supplanted, is relative to the time-spirit, the character of the school, and the state of the conflict.

¹ Phelps, pp. 4-5.

² All works referred to or quoted are listed in sectional bibliographies at the close of the essay.

It seems, moreover, somewhat unfair to the Romanticism of the Revolt to place such especial emphasis upon its reactionary aspects. When we speak of a movement as reactionary, we are apt to think of it as merely setting the brakes upon some other movement and endeavoring a return to some point or points in the path travelled. The Romantic Revolt contained both reactionary and progressive movements. It looked both toward the past (behind the age which preceded it) and towards the future. But when we have said this, we have not fully limited and described the tendencies of the movement. In its triumph it faced in many directions. Scott lived in the Gothic past; Keats and Landor as much, at least, in the classic as the romantic past; Wordsworth principally in the present; Shelley in the future; Byron in the savagely unfamiliar of various times, but preferably of the present; and Coleridge, insofar as he was a poet, by preference nowhere at all. But, withal, the Romantic Revolt, in that it was a transformation wrought by forces shaping a new society, was more progressive than reactionary. It was a breaking away from the past immediately preceding under the inspiration, in part, and guidance of a more remote past; but only in its extreme youth was it humbly adoring and servilely imitative.

2. THE ORIGIN OF THE ROMANTIC REVOLT

Some writers believe that the dawn of the romanticism of the Romantic Revolt was near the beginning of the eighteenth century. The truth of the matter is, perhaps, that the sun of Romanticism—or perhaps I had better say the moon, symbolical in its witchery and mysterious half-light of the romantic—the moon of Romanticism has never set in English literature, not even when the artificial sun of pseudo-classicism most brightly shone. The literature of the so-called Augustan Age was not the product of English genius untrammelled, but the fruit of English talent dominated by French classicism. The native aptitude of English men of letters was subdued by the spirit and fashion of the times. Yet it was still present. The stream

was still flowing beneath the ice of pseudo-classicism, breaking forth here and there through the agency of some one who felt too keenly the native glory of Spenser, Shakespeare, or Milton, to allow himself to live complacently at the dull conventional level of his age. Indeed, the outbreaks of the English genius were so frequent, so pervasive, that the eighteenth-century literature remained English in spite of the foreign and the pseudo-classic everywhere present in it. In some literary forms, particularly the novel, its realistic side had free play—perhaps too free play, as there was lacking the counter-check of romanticism, which is as inherent in English genius as realism, and, in fact, appears in her periods of most ambitious flight as the dominating spirit. English genius was, we may say, not more than half throttled, for her realistic spirit was in large part free, and her romantic spirit not wholly subdued. This is the reason we can, if bent upon it, trace the beginning of the Romantic Revolt back to Milton and Shakespeare, where they appear not as beginnings but as culminations.

While eighteenth-century England was heavily laden with a French classical veneer, beneath the surface was the same old England. All the impulses, we may be sure, that produced the glories of the Elizabethan age were still present, and were showing themselves in various ways and under strange disguises. The English literary kingdom was ruled by a literary élite, a race of polished dilettanti and connoisseurs, more cosmopolitan than English. Enthusiasm was discountenanced; "reasonable" sentiment and cold or affected criticism was the mode. We may properly expect, therefore, to find the literature only in very small part truly representative of the English; but we may reasonably expect to find the stifled fire breaking forth in other directions, the real heart of the people finding expression in other ways than in literature, and to find literature but a far-off echo of the voice of English genius. It shall be my endeavor to show that all the impulses so markedly present in the Romantic Revolt were markedly present in the Augustan Age; that they found sometimes full, but more often scanty,

expression in the literature of that age; and that slowly, and practically unperceived by the literati of the time, these impulses rose to dominance, and their dominance constituted the Romantic Revolt. We have, then, to consider not a birth, but a transformation, a metamorphosis. One age did not die that the other might be born; one simply became the other by exaggeration or accentuation of certain of its own characteristics and atrophy of certain others. Regarded in this way it seems not inapt to say that the Romantic Revolt is a caricature of the Augustan Age, though the caricature surpasses the original by far in worth.

I shall undertake to show, then, that the prominent features of the Romantic Revolt were all present in the eighteenth century before the revolt proper begins. Conversely it will become evident that pseudo-classicism lived on in the works of the romantic poets, who were not half so romantic as they may have thought themselves, and as we sometimes think them. If we do not allow ourselves to be dazzled by great names, and if we read not merely the great works of the romanticists, but their minor works as well, and their prose as well as their poetry, we shall probably agree that the romantic literature as a whole is very like the Augustan. Much of Wordsworth's poetry bears the distinguishing marks of the eighteenth century; Shelley's prose is Augustan, and so is much of the rhetoric and declamation of his poorer verse. Pope's power, and Addison's, and Johnson's, were indeed broken, but not yet cast off. Nor was their sovereignty entirely cast off, if forsooth they have ever entirely lost their sovereignty, until after the revolt was over. Few in Byron's day would have had the hardihood to declare, even could they have felt it to be so, that Pope was *no* poet; and we know from the Byron-Bowles controversy what a storm among the romanticists even a questioning of Pope's superiority could raise. The Romantic Revolt was probably never fully conscious of itself. The romanticists of the subsequent, the Victorian period, were the first to realize wherein their immediate progenitors differed most radically from the Augustans, whom they, the Victorians, scorned or affected to scorn.

3. THE THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

In the middle of the nineteenth century, when many scientific minds were grappling with conceptions destined to revolutionize the thinking world and give it simpler theories of the ultimate causal relations of things, Karl Marx, the father of scientific Socialism, advanced a so-called materialistic conception of history. In reality the theory is materialistic only in about the same sense that Darwin's theory of the origin of species is materialistic; it is materialistic in the sense that it postulates that material existence determines all national existence and conditions ultimately all spiritual existence; it is deterministic, and means to be scientific; but it does not declare that man has no soul, or that the soul is a kind of matter or the product of matter, nor does it affirm all "the facts of the universe to be sufficiently explained by the existence and nature of matter." It affirms only that, human psychology being such as it is, many of the facts of social and national history are explained by the nature of the physical universe. It has nothing necessarily to do with philosophical materialism, and would better, perhaps, have been termed a *deterministic* conception of history, since it assumes history to be the record of a chain of cause and effect in which every effect springs from an adequate cause, and since it denies, either explicitly or by implication, freedom (in the sense of self-determination) of the will; for of course to admit freedom of the will would be to admit an indeterminate factor which would vitiate all hard and fast, "scientific," conclusions. The theory, therefore, in common with all scientific theories which have to do with human psychology, has for its philosophical basis determinism.

As the study of this postulate of Marx, and a perusal of the arguments pro and con, was the stimulus which led to the formulation of my own theory of history, which I have tried to keep in mind throughout this study of a literary period, it is most convenient by way of introduction to devote some further attention to the Marxian theory. That theory is otherwise known

as the economic interpretation, or conception, of history, and, to define it briefly, it postulates that all national history is ultimately conditioned by and *is*, in large measure, the product of the economic struggles that take place between nations, or between classes of the same nation. By the Socialists, of course, the emphasis is placed upon class struggle. In the words of a high priest of Socialism, and a contemporary and friend of Marx:

. . . *all* past history, with the exception of its primitive stages, was the history of class struggles; . . . these warring classes of society are always the products of the modes of production and of exchange—in a word, of the *economic* conditions of their time; . . . the economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis, starting from which we can alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical, and other ideas of a given historical period.³

In other words, according to this theory, after the fundamental characteristics of a nation have been fixed in the primitive stages of its development by its environment and its reactions against its environment, all the “superstructure” of its civilization, the forms of its religion, the character of its polity, and even its mature contributions to art, may be explained by accurately describing its economic history and showing all the causal relations of that history.

This is of course an exaltation—in point of effective force—of economic situation and need above philosophy, of blind impulse above reason, of the short-sighted instinctive mob above the great man. History is not to be interpreted as the work of great intellects impressing themselves upon society and shaping it to their bidding. Historic idealism must give place to historic determinism.⁴ Hero-worship must go. The hero—I mean the outstanding personality which appears to dictate or have dictated the religious beliefs, the ethical or political notions, or the esthetic principles and practice of nations; in short, the hero in the Carlylean sense—is merely representative. He seizes

³ Engels, p. 41.

⁴ Ghent, p. 9.

upon the occasion of economic stress to formulate a religious, or ethical, or esthetic code which is in line with the economic demand of the dominating class, or the class that is attempting to dominate. The struggle to get a living is the soil, as it were, from which spring forth all the other struggles in art and ethics and religion.

It is no wonder that the theory, like Darwin's theory of the origin of species, has met with lusty opposition. The idealist is as loth to believe that his art, his morals, his religion are each and all dictated by his belly, as that his ancestors had arboreal habits.

The idealist sees that the supremacy of science in this latter day has brought in its train an increased desire to simplify in every field the explanation of the manifestations of life. The Newtonian and Darwinian theories have explained so much, made so comparatively simple much that was before complex and puzzling, that it is little to be wondered at that men, dazzled by the splendor of such achievement, have sought equally simple and direct explanations of complex human phenomena. In doing so they have been wont to neglect the fact that man's intellectual relations, by virtue of that intellect, are on a very different plane from those of emotion, or those of instinct and physical forces with which the biologist and physicist deal. To be sure, man is to a great extent at the mercy of emotion, instinct, and physical law, and therefore many of his activities may be explained by reference to them; but since man is endowed with reason, with the power of compelling nature to assist him in overcoming itself and himself, and since science cannot prove that man is compelled by blind necessity in the exercise of that reason which permeates more or less all his activities, a loop-hole of escape is left the idealist (and by idealist is meant the philosopher who assumes the supremacy of the intellect as a first cause in civilized human activity). He admits the power of industrial and social and physical conditions, but he also affirms that another agency is at work in human affairs; that there is, as one writer puts it, "a series of cultural influences reshaping

the fundamentals of men's thoughts.'²⁵ In other words, man's intellect with its ideals is at least as important and as propulsive in his world as his body with its appetites. Who can completely explain his own life on the economic basis alone? Surely every reflective man knows himself, the hidden springs of his own actions, better than he can possibly know the motive forces of the vast historical panorama of a nation; yet in how many cases can he explain his own actions by reference to his economic struggle to live, or to live well? Perhaps in the last analysis all actions, whether motivated by reason or instinct, would be found to be self-preservative in their tendency, but it would be difficult to show even this. Impulses arising from affection, which lead even to the sacrifice of the life of the individual for that of another, or for an institution, or a state, seem to belong in many instances to another category than that of self-preservative actions.

With these statements by way of preface, I shall ignore extended arguments that are made for and against the Marxian conception, and come at once to my own conception—which, judging from the confusion of claims among the adherents and students of Marx, would be considered by some an interpretation, by others a modification, of the Marxian conception. As I view it, while the economic forces may shape the mould into which life must run or be eventually destroyed, yet within this mould there is the possibility of considerable variation in quantity and quality of content; it is even not inevitable that life, as an active self-directed content, shall press out in all directions to the limits of the mould (though in general such is the case), hence there is the possibility of self-variation of form; but if life as an active force breaks through the limits set by the mould and flows beyond, the result is distortion, deformity, and ultimately destruction. To illustrate: some faith, some sentiment, some prejudice may prevent a people taking advantage to the full of economic conditions—that is, life refuses to fill out the mould; but on the other hand a faith, be it in religion, ethics, art, or busi-

²⁵ Peixotto, p. 5.

ness, cannot survive in its purity when economic conditions are not in harmony with it; for the adherents are either eliminated, or forced by pressure to modify the faith to suit the conditions. In this conception it will be seen that there is attempted a reconciliation of the deterministic with the idealistic; for while admitting economic conditions as a mould, or, perhaps better, a confine determining in general the limits within which life is to move, it is nevertheless asserted that within these limits, in the possible variation of form and the quality and quantity of content, there is abundant opportunity for the play of other forces, including the individual human free will. It is asserted, moreover, that all these forces act upon the restraining barrier, tending more or less constantly to push it outward. Thus stated the theory remains philosophical, but scarcely scientific; for so considered life appears no longer merely passive, bounding and rebounding from cause to effect and from effect to cause, as if it were a ball between two walls, or—to express it in terms of the analogy we have used hitherto—like molten lead poured within a mould, but as an active agent having within itself incalculable, because unknown, powers of self-propulsion.

Whether Marx and his followers would admit such modification of the theory—a modification which would banish all the theory's claim to be scientific, it seems to be practically conceded by all that to the theory in its simplest, boldest form the idea of reaction must be admitted. As Engels says:

The economic condition is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—the political forms of the class contests, and their results, the constitutions, the legal forms, and also all the reflexes of these actual contests in the brains of the participants, the political, legal, philosophical theories, the religious views—all these exert an influence on the development of the historical struggles, and in many instances determine their form.⁶

From the theory as thus interpreted it follows that there are interactions between ideals and economic conditions; that if economic conditions are hostile, the ideal must not only struggle

⁶ Ghent, p. 15. I have been unable to obtain the work in which the statement originally appeared.

against these conditions for the realization of itself, but even for its own existence. Now, would say such of the theory's advocates as are inclined to determinism, in general the conditions when hostile are too strong for the ideal. They would affirm that perhaps nine times out of ten, men on a sinking ship grow panic-stricken and cease to be ruled by principle when it becomes clearly apparent that only a limited number can be removed to safety and there is no clearly apparent principle as to who shall be favored; that under similar conditions, ninety-nine times out of a hundred panic ensues in large undisciplined social units; that the larger the unit and as a consequence the more lax the discipline, the weaker the ideal and the stronger the economic influence opposing. So, conversely, an ideal may meet with success if a too great economic need does not oppose it; it will be accepted when it appeals to the reason and sympathies of the majority, and the majority does not have to sacrifice much to realize it. To illustrate: it was comparatively easy to abolish slavery in those regions where slavery was not profitable; but in those regions where it was profitable, the popular religious, political, and ethical codes undertook to justify it.

While we may grant thus much to the determinist, we should not, however, forget another fact, strikingly evident, indeed, but often overlooked by the "scientific" Socialist in his dependence upon instinct and economic need working blindly, and as inevitably as gravitation, to bring about the elevation of the "masses." The ideal plays a prominent part in the readjustments of society, for such readjustments are not the result of upheaval from below alone, but of disintegration from above, as well. Just as with great readjustments in the earth's crust, it would seem that disintegration and displacement in the higher levels must take place first; otherwise the subterranean forces are held in equilibrium and abeyance. It is not necessary in all cases that there should be a "resistless pressure from below" in order that the elevation of the "masses" may be brought about. A proper adjustment to time of some ideal held by the majority of the upper classes may effect the change. Here in

America, for instance, we can hardly say with reason that the insistence upon education for the lower strata of society is the result of a demand on the part of those strata.

But it is true that like the subterranean forces of the earth, the subterranean forces of society are for the most part blind. The proletariat is long-suffering because conditions keep it to a large extent disorganized. Still, although it is lacking in intellect, it is strong in passion. It is fond of simple propositions, of catchwords and phrases, and is stubborn in its devotion to them. In so far the determinist is right in regarding the proletariat, and, indeed, to some extent other classes of society, as a shuttle driven by forces over which it has no control. But, on the other hand, this lack of intellect makes it a fit instrument for the ideal, makes it capable of being welded into a strong, fanatical, and formidable organization by the capable leader from above, who expresses what it dimly feels, and indicates an outlet for its suppressed emotions and desires.

So much for the theory. Now, to turn to the application of the theory to a period of national life. At perhaps no time in the history of the modern world has the effect of economic conditions been more apparent than in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. At that time of high national nervous tension great displacements had taken place in all strata of society. The middle class backed by newly acquired wealth was struggling with the aristocracy for political supremacy, while a new class, the proletariat such as we know today, was partly formed and was still rapidly forming, and becoming conscious of itself as a class. It was, moreover, becoming imbued with sentiments proper to itself, which were being expressed for it by the higher classes in the literature of the time.

It is my purpose to show as far as I may be able how the industrial movement and the consequent social movement produced the literary movement (or perhaps I had better say, *directed* the literary movement), and how the latter reacted upon

the former. Ordinarily the connection between art and economic and social conditions are not easily traced. The difficulty arises from the nature of art itself. As one writer puts it:

Art, more than any other considerable pursuit, more even than speculation, is abstract and inconsequential. Born of suspended attention, it ends in itself. It encourages sensuous abstraction, and nothing concerns it less than to influence the world. Nor does it really do so in a notable degree. Social changes do not reach artistic expression until after their momentum is acquired and their other collateral effects are fully predetermined. . . . Currents may indeed cut deep channels, but they cannot feed their own springs—at least not until the whole revolution of nature is taken into account.⁷

But in the period under consideration, because of the almost universal disturbance wrought by the economic and social displacements, the traces of those displacements are perhaps more plainly apparent in the arts than they usually are. And this is especially true in the art of literature, the purpose of which, more than that of any other art, is to express ideas. For literature, when it is vital, takes for material the ideas that are pulsating everywhere in a society on the *qui vive* with thought and expectancy.

It will perhaps occur to the reader to ask, if literature is more or less dependent for content and form upon economic conditions, and if, therefore, a given economic condition can be depended upon to produce the corresponding literature—why it was that in England the Romantic Revolt appeared earlier than in France, where the economic changes were much the same; and why it was unconscious, while in France it was not unconscious but had a definite revolutionary program; why also in France the revolt in literature lagged so far behind the social struggle, which came, apparently, at an earlier period than in England. The answer must be in terms of at least two factors, the difference in national temperament, and the past history of the two nations, for to these are due the respective social and civic institutions of the two nations. For instance, the English,

⁷ Santayana, *Reason in Art*, pp. 169–170.

through their native conservatism, their capability of being only slightly pervious to new ideas, are capable of holding one theory and acting upon the opposite—a characteristic that accounts, by the way, for the fact that most of the poets of the early part of the romantic period did not know that their work was romantic.⁸

Only a comparative study of literatures in the light of the corresponding conditions under which they were produced, and of national dispositions, could satisfactorily dispose of all the difficulties in the application of the Marxian or a modified Marxian theory to literature. I shall not attempt in these pages anything so ambitious. I shall merely postulate that national literary characteristics, like characteristics of national temper, remain from period to period fundamentally the same; but that the literature of any given period is produced in a different environment from that of any period that has preceded, although it is, at the same time, influenced by conscious or unconscious imitation of the periods that have preceded. The race experience is progressively developed by experience resulting from new environment, but it bears always the hall-mark of its antecedent states. Each period finds its truest literary expression through its own artists. These artists are, to be sure, individuals, with individual peculiarities the origin of which it is not possible in all cases to discover. But allowing for the idiosyncrasies of individual genius, there is nevertheless enough in common between individual geniuses of the same time to require further explanation beyond that of chance and of imitation. When we see certain of these common characteristics becoming more distinct from generation to generation, we are justified in seeking deeper causes. Several critics, notable among whom are Taine and Brunetière, who, as Professor Gayley has shown,⁹ were anticipated by Hegel, have placed emphasis upon various influences by which the literary productions of any given period are shaped. We may briefly summarize these influences as four: (1) the race, or the

⁸ For a discussion of the differences between the social conditions in France and England at the time of the French Revolution, see Cestre, Chapter I.

⁹ Congress of Arts and Sciences, H. J. Rogers ed., vol. III, pp. 344 ff.

influence of heredity and temperament; (2) the environment, political, social, and physical; (3) the moment; (4) the individual. But I shall attempt nothing more than to show what is conceived to be the *economic* reasons why throughout several successive generations in the literature of England certain peculiarities became more and more manifest, until at length they reached a culmination in the Romantic Revolt.

4. LITERATURE AS AN EXPRESSION OF SOCIAL CONDITION

Wrote the Duchess of Buckingham to Lady Huntingdon, in reply to an invitation to hear Whitfield:

I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers; their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with disrespect towards their superiors, in perpetually endeavouring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting.¹⁰

Remarks the *Oakland Enquirer* of Wednesday evening, September 29, 1909, editorially:

Dominicio d'Allesandro, general president of the International Hod-carriers and Building Laborers' Union of America has been knighted by the King of Italy. Here is a recognition of the real American aristocracy.

Now, something very radical has happened in the century and a half since the Duchess of Buckingham wrote. Certainly no English lady would so express herself today; and the latter comment and the fact commented upon would hardly have been conceivable to the Dutchess and her contemporaries. This radical thing that has happened is a social revolution yet far from complete. The newspaper comment marks the progress of the movement on its intellectual side up to the present day; the cynical comments that might be made upon it by the Socialists or by employers of labor are a measure of the movement's incompleteness. But the ideal is well established in common

¹⁰ Smith, *Cowper*, p. 5.

thought. And what is this social movement? Under the various disguises in which it may present itself there is one fundamental movement—the movement of the lower ranks of life forward and upward to power and possession. The battle is still on. One class—the middle—has come into its own; and in doing so has become almost indistinguishable from the whilom aristocracy, partly through increase of wealth and consequent increase of political and social power, partly through pushing back into the ranks behind it—into the proletariat—the weaker or less fortunate of its own numbers. Even in the most democratic of countries, it appears that the social gulf separating the employing class from the employed is constantly becoming wider. While wealth may be more and more diffusing itself, still it is true that it is tending more and more to concentrate itself in large masses in the hands of a few. Hence the diffusion is continually becoming more unequal, and hence the social inequalities are becoming continually more evident. One bridge by which the middle class crossed and came up with the aristocracy, namely, the right to property, is yet held against the have-nots by those who have, under ethical and legal codes which permit of its being crossed by increasingly smaller numbers of the non-possessors; but the other bridge, the ethical theory that every man has the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is still standing. Meanwhile the proletariat is skirmishing and mustering its cohorts.

It is this struggle, ill-defined, because the contesting forces are ill-defined and each a very complex body, but nevertheless a real struggle, which Marx contends conditions all history. If it be so, then it is reasonable to suppose that literature as an expression of life, and, indeed, as a part of history, is at least to a great extent also conditioned by the struggle. That such a conditioning does take place appears to me clearly evident in the English literature of the last two hundred years; and it is my purpose to point out as adequately as I may certain respects wherein it was so conditioned, particularly in the period known as that of the Romantic Revolt.

Nations, we assume, like individuals, pass from one mood to another. As in individuals, these moods are the result of impressions either from within or from without. Because in modern life nations can no longer be practically isolated units, and are *par consequence* by no means wholly distinct entities, there is really no longer much distinction between impressions from within and from without. Nations are now one family. Therefore a mood felt by one nation will very likely be felt by every other at the same or almost coincident time. England, however, because of its isolation, comparatively speaking, has been somewhat an exception to the rule. In its national moods it appears to be easier to separate that which arises from impulses from within from that which comes from impulses from without.

Now, we further assume that an art, to be really vital, must in general express the mood of the time in which it is produced. An art which clings to the old forms and materials when those forms and materials no longer correspond to the national mood and thought is, generally speaking, weak art. The artist may under certain circumstances produce art too late or too soon to be in time with the impulses of the nation, which art, rarely or never of first rank, may be considered good art by a subsequent generation, when an approximation of the mood under which the work was produced is in the ascendant. For instance, William Blake's work as a poet was not appreciated until long past his own period. As a rule, the artist fails because he is divided against himself. He fails because he feels that his work is not most truly an expression of himself, who is really in sympathy to some extent with the dominant mood of the time, yet it is a weak expression of what he himself would have been had he lived when the school for which he stands is subsequently in the buoyancy of full power. An instance of such failures would be perhaps, Gray; or, better, Collins.

England was, I affirm, in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first of the nineteenth, in a mood which steadily deepened, a mood arising partly from external, but mostly from internal impulses—if I may so speak. These impulses arose in

turn from the social movements which had been going on slowly for centuries, but which during this period was vastly accelerated by the industrial revolution. This mood expressed in literature is what we know as the Romantic Revolt.

I would offer, therefore, for consideration this thesis: The Romantic Revolt in English literature was only one aspect or manifestation of a great social movement, other aspects of the movement being the political, in the struggle for the extension of the right of suffrage; religious, in the rise of Evangelicism and Methodism; ethical, in the rise of humanitarianism; and esthetic, in naturalism and the romanticism of the remote (which finds most full expression in the literature). These movements within the great movement are not entirely distinct one from the other, but have a body in common. They moreover interact one with another, and we can explain no one of them without taking into account all the others. Just as psychology cannot explain any aspect of the mind without explaining all the mind's faculties and their interactions, so with any aspect of a historical movement. But in attempting to point out the effects of the social change upon literature we must also take into account that England was something already before the industrial revolution began; and that English literature, also, was something. What the state of the literature was we shall further consider after we have taken a brief survey of what England was before, during, and after the industrial revolution.

II. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

1. WHAT IT WAS, AND ITS ECONOMIC EFFECTS

I shall, following many precedents, restrict the term Industrial Revolution to the vast change which took place in manufacture between the years 1740 and 1830, although it might very well be considered to include the concomitant and contingent revolution in agriculture. Concerning this revolution much has been written. In endeavoring an epitome of the history of English manufacture and agriculture during this period, I feel guilty of repeating a more than twice told tale, the more that I do not feel at liberty to attempt any improvement upon previous recitals, and my narrative, in so far as it may be called a narrative, must necessarily be brief. But my apology for retelling these facts shall be that it is my belief that upon most of us who have studied English history but superficially, and who have been therefore too much absorbed in the chronicles of royalty, and politics, and wars, the momentous industrial changes that went on in England during the last three quarters of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth made but slight impression. In watching the great historical characters moving across the stage, and the vast international conflicts, we were all but oblivious of the tremendous change taking place in the way England was getting its living.

Previously to 1740 there had been, since medieval times, little alteration in the character of English industry and the methods by which it was carried on. Modern industry with its factories, its machines, and its minute division of labor, was practically unknown. Trade was mostly local and insular; that is, each locality produced nearly all its own necessities, and England as a whole depended little upon foreign markets. Just as in Shakespeare's day, local production and distribution, in the towns, were regulated by the trade guilds, which limited accord-

ing to local exigencies the number of masters and apprentices, the wage scale, hours of labor, etc., and consequently the amount of production.

But the year 1735 gave birth to an event of the greatest moment, in the eyes of Karl Marx, to the industrial world, and incidentally to all other spheres of man's endeavor. In that year "John Wyalt brought out his spinning machine, and began the industrial revolution."¹¹ So says Marx, and whether this be the exact truth or not, authorities are generally agreed that the revolution began somewhere within the second quarter of the century, and that if machinery did not actually create the revolution, it at least was by far the greatest factor. Mr. G. T. Warner affirms that in 1740 industry, if not primitive, is at any rate somewhat old-world; in 1815 it is modern.¹² Within these seventy-five years took place the principal changes that transformed, industrially, medieval into modern England. Mr. Warner draws up for us an imposing array of figures showing how within that period the manufactures and exports increased with prodigious rapidity.¹³ And what do these figures mean? They mean the development of machinery and the factory to supersede individual hand-work. They mean the transformation of the independent or semi-independent peasant and artisan into the mill-hand working a stipulated number of hours a day for a stipulated wage, determined by the demand for his labor and the supply of it to be had; and in many cases, doubtless, the transformation of the more thrifty or crafty into mill-owners or landed proprietors. They mean the competition of laborers for each other's jobs, in an industrial community where labor is "free" to take such wages as its own competition with itself shall establish, or to starve; it means the increased exploitation of the labor of women and children; it means a great many other things, as I shall indicate when we come to a consideration of the social effects of the revolution. But in all this

¹¹ Marx, *Capital*, p. 367.

¹² Traill, vol. V, pp. 600-601.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 601.

change the one thing above all to be kept in mind is that it is a change from a relatively restricted, closely regulated, communal form of industrial production to a "free", competitive, *individualistic* form.

Turning now from the town to the country, we find that previous to 1740, in the rural districts economic production was by no means confined to agriculture. England was dotted all over with little villages, wherein were plied independently by various cottagers a number of trades, chief of which was spinning. But these trades were carried on for the most part as subsidiary to farming. Neighboring lands were tilled in common by the village community, or held independently or semi-independently by its members. Of the common lands, fields were each year allotted in rotation to the members of the community, and each member was allowed the produce for the year from his allotment in return for the tillage. Of partition fences there were few or none, and grazing privileges upon allotments were free to all the community during a certain season. In addition, usually, or often, certain lands not so suitable for cultivation, known as the "Commons," were regarded as the property of all, and used in common for pasturage and woodcutting. There were many variations from this typical community, but into a description of these we need not enter. The point of the matter is, in brief, that agriculture was as yet in the medieval or semi-medieval stage, and the community and the family were yet the chief social units in all industry. While the processes of industry were wasteful, and ill-adapted to improvement from within or from without, to each member of the social unit a reasonable competence was assured, and periods of adversity were easily met by the strong mutually helpful communal spirit. The important point to notice is that society is organized as yet (although previously to 1740 there had been marked inroads upon the system) to a very great extent upon a *communal* basis.

Into these semi-medieval farming communities entered changes more far-reaching and decided than any that had ever entered before. The system of common-field farming which had origin-

ated at some time in rather remote antiquity—before the Norman Conquest—and “in 1689 governed the tillage of, at least, three-fifths of the cultivated soil of the country”¹⁴ was decaying. But agriculture suddenly became more and more profitable, as rapidly more and more of the population, on account of the industrial revolution, was becoming “detached from the soil” and therefore dependent almost entirely upon the farmer for its food-supply. Writers such as Arthur Young began to deplore the wastefulness of common-field farming. The large landlords began to alter their methods, and to secure more abundant crops. It was the large landlord, particularly the capitalist farmer, I presume, in distinction from the country gentlemen, who led the way in the agricultural revolution. Landholders with small resources in capital could not or would not risk a change from traditional methods which had given them and their fathers at least a competence—a change which if it should prove erroneous would plunge them into sudden ruin. But when once the way had been established, it became a highway; every farmer could see that if he was to reap his share of the profits from increased manufacture and commerce, he must make his holdings produce the utmost possible, and (and this is important) not primarily for consumption on those holdings, as up to that time had been the intent of production.

At least four causes were at work during the period to stimulate agriculture: (1) the growth of the great towns or cities; (2) the changes in the methods of agriculture itself; (3) the great wars of the latter part of the period, culminating in the great war with France; (4) bad harvests.

There is nothing so stimulative to agricultural development as the growth of the great manufacturing centers within or near the agricultural districts. Such centers afford during prosperity a convenient and almost omnivorous market for the products of the farm. And besides furnishing a multitude of mouths to be fed with whatever the farmer has of surplus, through the fastidiousness which results from the possession of great wealth they

¹⁴ Traill, vol. V, p. 102.

promote improvement in the quality of the product. The growth of the towns increased the prices of food-stuffs and such raw material as the farmer furnished to the manufacturer. The matter of *convenience* is not to be overlooked, for convenience means a decreased outlay for transportation, equivalent to an increase of price, and an increase in the quantity and range of productions classed as perishable.

Furthermore, the increase of wealth in the great commercial centers affected the country economically for the better in yet another way. Much of the surplus capital which the prosperous manufacturer or merchant may find on his hands seeks investment in land. This tends to produce a thriftier class of landlords.¹⁵ It is a common ambition among tradesmen and manufacturers to become country gentlemen. To attain this desire they may buy outright the estates of some family financially embarrassed or unable to withstand the temptation of a prodigal offer; but the more usual way is, I believe, to build up such an estate by accretion—a portion secured here and a portion there. Of course there is your townsman who has no ambition to be a country gentleman, but who buys up such land as the law of primogeniture, family pride, and other obstacles do not prevent him purchasing, merely as a safe investment. In any event, the purchase price is likely to be exorbitant, and the purchaser finds that in order to get even a fair return on his investment he must either increase the output on the land or else lower the cost of production, or both; or, even, as the Corn Laws bear testimony, seek governmental aid in keeping up or raising the prices of products. The man of commercial training when turned landlord was more apt to demand a balance on the profit side of the ledger than the hereditary proprietor with his semi-feudal ideas of aristocratic ease and paternal liberality toward his dependents. To the fact that there was such a country gentry bulwarked by the law of primogeniture, traditions of family pride, and loyalty to the family domain, England owes the fact that the agricultural revolution did not keep pace with

¹⁵ Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, vol. II, pp. 101-102, 113.

the revolution in manufacture, but lagged behind. The tendency, however, on the part of the gentry to absent themselves more and more from their estates and the resultant practice of long-time leasing to men of purely commercial instincts, had in the long run the effect of commercializing agriculture.

But assuredly agriculture did not owe all its improvement to change of landlords. It owed as much or more to the diffusion of the commercial spirit throughout the upper and middle classes. The success of her manufactures quickened the pulse of England with the prospect of rich material reward, at the same time that it cultivated in all classes new tastes, so that many things which had been looked upon as luxuries before, appeared to be necessities. The landed proprietors, looking upon what science had done for the improvement of manufacture, inquired why systematic experiment might not improve as much the methods of farming. So scientific husbandry came into being, owing its genesis chiefly to the success of scientific manufacture.

An accelerator of the movement in agriculture—a movement which would have been more healthy without it and less disastrous in political and social consequences—were the wars of the latter part of the period under review. Although England was engaged in these wars, none of them touched her “tight little island,” while at the same time the industries of her trade rivals lay prostrate under the trampling heel of soldiery. It seemed, as indeed was true for a time, that England was to be the manufacturing center of the world, and that she would have no competitor upon her own ground, in her own island, in agriculture. It is no wonder, then, that the commercially minded dreamed dreams of ever increasing agricultural production, invested heavily in leases, in improved tools and seeds, and pushed on the advance.

The most conspicuous economic effects of this stimulation of agriculture were: (1) the increase of production; (2) the concentration of land into large holdings by purchase or lease, i.e., “capitalistic farming;” (3) the lowering (and the retarding of the rise) of the cost of production through improvement of the

methods of management by concentration of control and the introduction of a spirit exclusively profit-seeking, through improvement in the processes of production, and consequent upon the unprecedented lust for profits, through the unfair division of the profits with the laborer; (4) the increase of acreage devoted to cultivation. As farming upon a large scale became increasingly profitable, landlords looked with more and more longing upon those lands which had hitherto been more or less the common property of all. These lands could not be enclosed but by Act of Parliament. Upon the plea, however, and a plea well founded, that their cultivation was called for by the needs of the manufacturing districts, bills for enclosure were freely passed. Slater gives the following estimates of acreage of waste lands enclosed during several periods:¹⁶

1727-1760	.....	74,518
1761-1792	.....	478,259
1793-1801	.....	273,891
1802-1815	.....	739,743
1816-1845	.....	199,300

Now that we have recalled the principal economic facts of the industrial and agricultural revolutions, we must not neglect to observe that the industrial revolution was making necessary and advancing a change in another allied sphere, the sphere of transportation. From the year 1767 on, Brindley and his fellow engineers were busy "covering England with a network of canals." But of more importance commercially and socially were the roads. One needs but turn to an account of John Wesley's travels through the England of the early eighteenth century to understand that the possession of some peculiar zeal or employment was necessary to make an Englishman a traveller in his own country. English highways had been from time out of mind the terror of travellers, being in some places but mere lanes through which in a rainy season four horses could not draw an empty coach. During the latter part of the period under discussion these were rapidly broadened and improved

¹⁶ Slater, p. 267.

into the superexcellent turnpikes that are now Britain's pride. The improvement of the highways was so extensive and so thorough that contemporary writers refer to it as marvelous. The effect of these improvements upon the social life of the nation, and ultimately upon the literature, we shall hereafter consider.

Having in mind now the main facts of the English industrial and agricultural revolutions which transformed medieval industrial England into modern industrial England, we shall pass to a consideration of how these economic changes affected the nation, as a nation, in whole and in part.

2. THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION

The population of England and Wales increased only about one million between the years 1685 and 1740; yet during that period Birmingham augmented its population by six hundred per cent. From 1740 to 1760 the increase was still not rapid except in certain great towns—such, for instance, as those devoted chiefly to the production of hardware and pottery, cotton and woolen goods. After 1760 the general population exhibits a remarkable growth, most of which can be accounted for by the growth of the industrial centers. Evidently the industrial revolution began before the day of great inventions and the factory system, which was inaugurated about 1740. In fact, it probably began at the very time that the feudal system began to decay; nay, perhaps the beginning of the revolution and the beginning of the decay of feudalism were one and the same. Be that as it may, it is agreed that one of the most obvious effects of the industrial revolution was the increase of urban population—an increase which received a mighty impetus from the introduction of labor-saving machinery and minute division of labor, which came after 1740.

Now, whence did the cities' great numbers come? Partly, no doubt, from abroad. During the period of the wars, when England's industries were feverishly vigorous because of the

industrial apathy of her rivals, doubtless many a workman, especially of the skilled class, found his way across the North Sea or the Channel. But by far the greater part, over and above the natural increase of those who already lived in the towns, must have come from the rural districts. The small country villages decayed. Many an English "sweet Auburn" dwindled to a shadow of its former self or passed out of existence, its inhabitants scattered either to the cities where the factories were calling, herded in barracks or marching and counter-marching for King George, or gone overseas to seek new homes in the new world. With those who died fighting the battles of their masters, or those who became exiles we have nothing here to do; our chief concern is with the current of population which flowed from the country to the city. Of the forces moving this current not all were propulsive; then as now there was the "lure of the city." Then was beginning a new era in the struggle for survival. The more ambitious, hardy, and adventurous of the rural population were attracted cityward by the opportunities for advancement which the city offered; tales of those who succeeded came back to their native villages and induced the less venturesome to follow. We may surmise all this from what we see taking place in our own day. But the forces which bind the average man to his birthplace and his native occupation is strong in a nation not nomadic; it is strong in Englishmen, particularly in the uncultivated. A great propulsive force only can account for the stupendous shifting of population which England witnessed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The propulsive force was the force of necessity which changing economic conditions, the dominance of the commercial spirit, and a consequent sharper cleavage of society brought into play.

Prior to the eighteenth century England had not known a very sharp distinction between the classes rich and poor. Classes there were, of course; but they were not thought of in the peculiarly present-day sense of classes, so much as grades or ranks, closely allied, merging into each other, and so related that it was possible for a representative of one to pass on to

the next higher without immoderate exertion, remarkable ability, or phenomenally good fortune. The formation of a more distinct and impassive social stratification had a number of immediate causes, but the prime cause of all, or nearly all, was the revolution in industry and the contingent agricultural revolution. The immediate causes (we may consider them as separate though we must recognize that such separation is arbitrary) I conceive to be: The political and social ascendancy of the nobility and landed gentry; the prosperity of the middle classes; the urbanizing of the rural districts; the corrupting influence of an exclusively commercial point of view; the commercial alliance of the nobility, gentry, and the middle classes; and, most important of all, the retrogression of the laboring classes.

The Restoration and the Revolution of '88 were godsend to the nobility and landed gentry. In the changes of royal masters they took care so to secure their interests that the king should be subservient to them; they became the ruling class, the king dropped back to a position much like that which he had occupied during the feudal age, when he was in reality only a great lord among other great lords of almost equal power. Consequently, when the nobility became infected with the virus of commercialism, there was no royal check to prevent them from using their power to the utmost for their own advantage. They made themselves, through the use and abuse of that power, absolute rulers in Parliament; they controlled the municipalities; in agricultural districts their representatives were little gods whose good will was all important to the peasantry; the universities, the Church, the law courts were theirs.¹⁷ When this class found itself in the possession of immense wealth as well as of political power, it felt the more that it was divinely set apart for the shaping of the destinies of England, and became the more jealous of its prerogatives. But it allied itself with speculators from the cities and prosperous yeomen to secure the triumph of large-scale farming, with all the consequences which that system entailed. The cleavage of society was promoted deliberately

¹⁷ Hammond, p. 24.

by the landlords and the gentleman and yeoman farmers, who wished to make the laborers more subservient. The convenience of having a laboring clientele absolutely dependent was as much desired by the farmer of large holdings as by the mill-owner; indeed, it was declared openly as one of the excuses for enclosing and engrossing.¹⁸

In the cities, meanwhile, another class, which had taken its rise back in the free towns of the Middle Ages, the bourgeoisie, or middle class, was growing exceedingly wealthy. In subjection to it, if we may so speak, was the fast-forming proletariat of industrial workers, recruited from its own natural increase, from the ranks of the expropriated peasantry, or from the rear ranks of the middle-class battalions—from those who had been pushed to the wall in the free competition for wealth. The middle class, more adventurous, more unscrupulous, less bound by convention than the aristocratic landed classes, and unsupported by immemorial custom, embodied the very genius of the economic revolution. The symbol of its power was pounds sterling. The flaunting of that symbol in the faces of the proletariat, which respected the middle class for nothing but its money power, and which saw in that power the product of the causes which had wrought its own ruin, gave rise to a sense of caste especially bitter because not yet established as traditional.

Be it remembered that there was arising in the rural districts the counterpart of this middle class, the capitalistic farmers—the rural middle class. This class, it seems, was in large part composed of those who under the old semi-communal regime had been yeomen or other well-to-do small holders, too close in rank to the cottager, the day laborer, or the squatter to excite any profound jealousy of their position on the part of the latter. The pride of these farmers increased as their wealth increased; they naturally were inclined to look with contempt upon the unsuccessful. It is said that no man is as severe a taskmaster as he who has been promoted from the ranks; he is interested in emphasizing the distinction between his present and

¹⁸ Hammond, pp. 37-38.

his former self. Hence many a farmer came to be looked upon as a petty tyrant, and justly, and hated as the absentee landlord, who might be primarily responsible, was not.

A change of habits in the country and a spread of the spirit of the town countryward emphasized social cleavage. Up to, say, 1750 the habits of those who dwelt in the rural districts were practically those of many a generation that had gone before. Life was placid. The country aristocracy stayed in the country the year round, seldom went to the cities, seldom went farther from home than the nearest market town; while the peasantry did the work their fathers had done, did it in the same way, and were as content as mortals, heirs of discontent, well can be.¹⁹ In the community of the open-field village the same spirit reigned. With all the petty gradations of rank, and the strict community conventions, a semi-democratic shifting of rank was permissible, and, as in almost all walks of life in America today, it was easy for the ambitious, talented, and energetic to rise somewhat in the social scale, or for the shiftless or unfortunate to sink down. There was, in general, an absence of contention over political and social problems, and almost a total absence of class strife. In the latter part of the period we are considering, the means of access to and from the country were vastly increased by the improved roads and the excavation of numerous canals. The country squires went more often to the city; education, culture, knowledge of affairs, and the city-dweller with his city manners and notions penetrated more readily and frequently into the country. The contrast between the circumstances of those who could afford the new comforts and accomplishments and those who could not, who aspired to, but who despaired of ever attaining them, became more and more striking as the age wore on.

After enclosure the comparatively few surviving farmers, enriched, elevated intellectually as well as socially by the successful struggle with a new environment, faced, across a deep social gulf, the labourers who had now only their labour to depend upon. In the early part of the

¹⁹ Lecky, vol. VI, pp. 167-168.

nineteenth century, at any rate, it was almost impossible for a labourer to cross that gulf; on his side the farmer henceforward, instead of easily becoming a farm labourer if bankrupt, would rather try his fortune in the growing industrial towns.²⁰

As to the supplanting of the communal philosophy by the commercial philosophy—the doctrine of interdependence of classes and necessity of mutual helpfulness by the doctrine of *laissez-faire* and the devil take the hindmost—and its disastrous effects in drawing the line of demarkation between the rich and the poor, the employer and the employed, we need no better testimony than these statements by two thorough students of the industrial situation of that time:

The Woollen Cloth Weavers' Act [an Act to fix wages] had not been one year in force when Parliament was assailed by numerous petitions and counter-petitions. The employers declared that the rates fixed by the justices were, in face of the growing competition of Yorkshire, absolutely impracticable. The operatives, on the other hand, asked that the Act might be strengthened in their favour. The clothiers asserted the advantages of freedom of contract and unrestrained competition. The weavers received the support of the landowners and gentry in claiming the maintenance by law of their customary earnings. The perplexed House of Commons wavered between the two. At first a bill was ordered to be drawn strengthening the existing law; but ultimately the clothiers were held to have proved their case. The Act of 1756 was unconditionally repealed; and Parliament was now headed straight for *laissez-faire*.

The struggle over this Woollen Cloth Weavers' Act of 1756 marks the passage from the old ideas to the new. When, in 1776, the weavers, spinners, scribblers, and other woollen operatives of Somerset petitioned against the evil that was being done to their accustomed livelihood by the introduction of the spinning-jenny into Shepton Mallet, the House of Commons, which had two centuries before absolutely prohibited the gig-mill, refused even to allow the petition to be received.²¹

Writing of the period 1800 to 1824:

To the ordinary politician a combination of employers and a combination of workmen seemed in no way comparable. The former was, at most, an industrial misdemeanour; the latter was in all cases a political crime.²²

²⁰ Slater, p. 131.

²¹ Webb, *A History of Trade Unionism*, pp. 44–45.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

The dominating class felt that it was really a virtue to combine to maintain competition—particularly in the labor market; never before had the laboring classes been considered the natural enemies of their social superiors.²³

Drawn together by a common lust for riches, and a common philosophy, doctrine, economic theory—call it what you will—the upper and middle classes presented a pretty solid front industrially to the discontented under-dogs, although politically they were not so well united. Competition of product and labor—especially of labor—must be maintained. As the threats of the dispossessed grew louder and stories of what that dispossessed was capable of came across the Channel, panic fear made that front one of steel. Said Ruggles:

Was any additional inducement wanting to recommend district houses of industry, the particular situation and temper of the times would be that inducement. The lower orders of the kingdom are now pressing on the neck; and the toe of the peasant truly galls the kibe of the courtier. The relief which formerly was, and still ought to be petitioned for as a favour, is now frequently demanded as a right; that idleness and intemperance which formerly feared to be observed, now obtrusively presses forward to sight; the pauper is no longer satisfied with his allowance, nor the labourer with his hire; the faint rumor of distant atrocities, which disgrace human nature, reaches the ear of the multitude cleansed from the blood and carnage, and assumes to them the pleasing shape of liberty and property. The only class of men who have the power to calm the rising storm, are those in the middling ranks of life; and they are as much interested to preserve things as they are, as any other rank in the state. Property is the only solid bulwark of the nation; for, those who possess it have a natural desire to preserve it, and our laws and our constitution must stand or fall with it; besides, the danger lies immediately beneath this description of people.²⁴

“Property is the only solid bulwark of the nation!” Bless his sturdy commercial heart! how Matthew Arnold would have loved to take that for text and iteration. Here is the rallying

²³ See Coleridge, vol. VI, pp. 208–212. Coleridge not only states eloquently the case against the commercialization of social philosophy, but shows that the effects of that commercialism were omnipresent to the generous hearts of the time—those that had not grown smug and hardened in prosperity.

²⁴ Young, *Agriculture of Suffolk*, pp. 247–248.

cry of all the "haves" for the struggle against the "have-nots." How ruthless were the forces behind that "solid bulwark" one discerns readily enough in the pages of that fire-eating champion of the poor, Cobbett.

Of the economic retrogression of the laborer much has been said or implied already in the preceding pages; but since, as I conceive, the condition of the laborer has such a direct and important bearing upon the thesis I am endeavoring to establish, it should be stressed even at the risk of tediousness and repetition. The causes which effected the economic and moral degradation of the laborer are manifold, but the genesis of all of them is the industrial and agricultural revolutions.

In the country the most conspicuous cause was expropriation in the two forms of enclosing and engrossing. The wane of the country village began with the enclosing of the commons and wastes. The cottager had maintained a species of independence through his rights as pasturer of the common, and, it might be, of the common fields in season. He could keep a cow or two, a pig, some geese, and possibly other live stock, which with his garden went far toward making him able to spread a bountiful table and apparel himself comfortably. In addition, he usually had the privilege, if the commons and wastes were of such a nature as to permit, of a supply of fuel free for the gathering. A laborer could with a week's work obtain sufficient fuel to last him through the year. When the common was enclosed, engrossing, or the concentration of holdings, followed as a matter of course. Although the cottager might retain a nominal right of pasturage, or might be given a petty allotment of the land before held in common, for one reason or another either did him little good. Indeed frequently it was "arranged" to do him no good. From the enclosed land the squatter was of course summarily evicted. Such cottagers as held their gardens or small fields only through rental were at the mercy of the landlord who found large holdings more profitable than small. Freeholders, copyholders, and yeomen of small holdings in general, when the commons were taken away, fell into distress from which they

recovered only temporarily by disposing of their holdings to some engrosser. It was expected that the enclosing of the commons and wastes would result in a greater demand for agricultural labor, but it seems that the natural increase of demand that came from the increase of area under cultivation was offset by engrossing, methods of tillage, nature of production, the introduction of the piece-work system and the field labor of women and children. Furthermore, the supply of labor was increased through the abandonment of cottage manufacture, which often had furnished the cottager with employment in those seasons when he was not needed in the fields, but which now the competition of the great mills forced him to give up. Absentee landlordism played its part. The landlord rented to the farmer, who was of course interested in keeping down his own rents, and so shifted the burden so far as he could to the cottager who rented of him.

Enclosure and engrossing in time worked another hardship. In some parts sheep-raising was found to be more profitable than the cultivation of the soil, so that a tract of land that had before supported a goodly population of farm laborers was turned into a sheep-walk, and many of the peasantry had to "move on" for lack of employment. Again, some of the fields or sheep-walks were turned into game preserves, and the number of caretakers still further reduced. Marx cites a case in Scotland where 15,000 people were driven from their homes by the conversion of a district into a sheep-walk.²⁵ No doubt the increase in the number of wealthy men—the new "captains of industry," whose wealth and whose numbers continually grew—tended greatly to increase the number of holdings that could be thus devoted to the "pursuits of idleness." The hatred of the English peasant for the game preserve, and the complacency with which he looks upon the commission of the nominal crime of poaching is proverbial. What wonder, when the tradition lingers that once upon a time this very land belonged to his ancestors, from whom it was taken away by legalized robbery, by fraud, and by force.

²⁵ Marx, *Capital*, pp. 753-754.

These game preserves, by the way, and the war of lord and peasant that was waged over them were potent agents in drawing class lines.

One other cause of distress resulting from engrossing should be mentioned, viz., the loss of the right to glean. For various reasons involving a loss of profit the farmers frowned upon this practice. As, however, improved methods of harvesting left little to glean, the practice would doubtless have died of itself, in spite of surreptitious stealing from the sheaf.

The Poor Laws, which had been designed to benefit the laborer, were auxiliary to his economic and moral degradation. The landlord, the farmer, the mill-owner contrived so to administer the law as to make it contribute directly or indirectly to their own pockets—directly by a system of excessive charges; indirectly through a scanty compensation in charity for smallness or irregularity of wage, a compensation which not only took away the self-respect of the laborer but grievously burdened the small rate-payer and made it difficult for him to keep himself above the level of the very pauper he was supporting.²⁶

The inability of the rural districts to supply work for its population, the demand for labor in the cities and the consequent urban congestion furthered the degradation of the laborer in many ways. The horrors of the sweating system with its piece-work, long hours, child and pauper labor, its unsanitary herding, are too generally known to need recital here. It is sufficient to say that it seems to have prevailed throughout English industries. At its best the lot of the mill-hand and miner was not an enviable one, and when at the close of the Napoleonic wars long-continued industrial depression set in, that lot became desperate. They were worse off than the agricultural laborers, for though the latter might go in rags and tatters and subsist on potatoes, they at least had fresh air and sunshine.

In both city and country pauperism perpetuated and increased itself. Increasing pauperism did not act as a check upon increase of population; it seems rather to have stimulated

²⁶ *Malthus*, pp. 315 and 296-297; also, Coleridge, vol. VI, pp. 220-224.

increase.²⁷ The odium that attached to "being upon the rates" decreased naturally as such an untoward fate became more and more common and the reasons for it better understood. Since there was little hope on the part of the laborer that through delay he might become the possessor of land or of a competence, and since there were the "rates" to fall back upon in case of necessity, early marriage became more common. So, continually, a new supply of pauper children was produced to be farmed out by the authorities to mill-owners in a species of slavery called by way of euphemism "apprenticeship." The competition of this pauper child-labor kept wages down to a minimum, while the long hours which the children were compelled to work, the brutal treatment they were accorded, and the horrible lack of sanitation in the factories rapidly killed them off, and so produced a demand for more paupers to take their places, or else turned them out at the end of their "apprenticeship" stunted in body and mind, fit only for further pauperism or for criminality, and for the production of their like. To this wretched condition of the poor Cowper and Crabbe owe inspiration of some of their most effective work, and we shall see, I think, that it intensified at least three phases of the Romantic Revolt.²⁸

²⁷ Slater, p. 265.

²⁸ To the causes so far enumerated should be added at least three others: (1) The disproportion between the advance of the cost of living and the rise of wages. Wages, it seems, did advance, sometimes because of a general refusal of the laborers to accept the prices offered. And we may assume that the employers, being but human, were blessed with some sense of justice; besides they undoubtedly were wise in not wishing to kill the goose which laid the golden egg. But as usual wages failed to increase as fast as the price of necessities; in fact, they lagged far, far behind. (2) It appears to be true, however, that the industrial revolution cheapened manufactures to such an extent that the laborers in certain districts in certain prosperous seasons were able to improve their standard of life; but this elevation of standard proved only a further source of misery when another era of depression came on. (3) Taxes, then as now, were unequally distributed; the poor were made to bear more than their share of the heavy indebtedness incurred in providing sinecures for the favorites of the ruling class and in the prosecution of great trade and colonial wars. *Colonial* wars and trade wars, we say; but I have a suspicion that the motives back of all were largely commercial.

The woeful epic of the laborer in the industrial revolution is a long one—too long to be narrated in full here. We have space for little more than sketch and summary. Enough probably has already been said of pauperism as an effect of the economic retrogression; yet perhaps a bit of statistics will render us more sensible of the extent of the evil:

Gilbert's returns gave the cost of the Poor Law about 1784 as two million pounds, *i.e.*, it had increased six times as much as the increase of population. Moreover, this alarming increase had been gathering force for twenty years.

And here is the comment upon the fact:

It is certain on the whole that before 1784, for the poorer agricultural labourers with families, a terrible and hopeless struggle had already begun. Eighteenth-century society was soon to commence paying a heavy price for its settlement laws and corn laws, its extravagant wars, its neglect of education, and heaviest of all for its belated remorse and ill-considered attempts at reparation.²⁹

In 1784 pauperism had made but a good beginning; judge what it was later when the relief doubled and quadrupled, increased indefinitely.

As natural companions and followers of pauperism went hopelessness, irresponsibility, drunkenness, dissoluteness, crime, and bitter discontent. The laborer's independence gone, no hope remaining that he could ever advance beyond the circumstances to which he was born or to which he had fallen, why should he care whether or not he retained his respectability? Many a one did retain it, of course; so much we can premise from our knowledge of the sturdy, conservative British temper; but sufficient did not to lower the moral tone of the whole class. Since the mother of an illegitimate child was entitled to relief, while the mother of a legitimate one was not, unless destitute, a premium was put upon bastardy that produced the result which might have been expected. Drunkenness was born of pauperism and its companion hopelessness-in-ill-fed-monotony, and it did

²⁹ Traill, vol. V, p. 336 and p. 339.

not fail to nourish its parents in return. As a large part of the wealth of the country and the colonies was bound up in the production of spirits, it was perfectly in keeping with the situation that the "interests" should oppose interference with the manufacture and sale of intoxicants. One could get drunk for the good of his country, supporting the excise and commercialism. The result of all was disease and vice and crime; and the debtors' prisons, hotbeds of all three, were full to overflowing. The punishment of crime was still extremely severe. The criminal code of earlier, and perhaps more barbaric, England was yet in force, though tender-hearted victims of criminal offences, tender-hearted witnesses, and jurors, often prevented enforcement, by refusing respectively to complain, testify, or convict. Death or transportation were the penalties for crimes which are now considered petty. Batches of thieves and malefactors by the dozen and score were weekly "worked off" at English hangings. In the eyes of the law, property was as sacred as human life; and in the eyes of aristocratic and bourgeois society, more sacred. To mitigate the evils from which the poor suffered and to reform their morals it was proposed to distribute some thousand Bibles; but, "No notes! No comment! Distribute the Bible and the Bible only among the poor!"—a churchman is said to have exclaimed.³⁰ Yes, there should have been comment. The comment on a certain passage regarding the rich man would have made curious reading to the poor.

The result of the economic shifting and the sharper class cleavage was an intensified class struggle. Four more or less distinct cohorts mustered for the battle: the nobility and landed interests in general, the middle class or bourgeoisie, the industrial proletariat, the agricultural proletariat. And the strife was both political and industrial. In the political strife the landed interests faced the middle class backed by the two proletariats; in the industrial, the middle class of the cities faced the industrial laborers, the rural middle class and the landed gentry and nobility opposed the agricultural.

³⁰ Coleridge, vol. VI, p. 206.

The contest between the landed interests and the middle class was for the helm of the ship of state; it was the old contest intensified—the contest that had been going on ever since the days when the trading classes became so rich that their wealth demanded political recognition and obtained it. The contention becomes particularly violent during the first three decades of the nineteenth century because of the changes in industry and agriculture which had poured untold treasure into the strong box of mill and mine owner and capitalist farmer. When this class found itself in possession of so much of the “bulwark of society,” its pride rose, and its resentment of the chicanery by which political power was kept in the hands of the landed interests, so that those interests could legislate for their own profit, became bitter. The doctrine of “freedom and equality” found it a ready listener—a doctrine which, however, meant to it only the freedom to promote its own interests, and social equality with the nobility and gentry.

Allied politically with the middle class were the proletariats, industrial and agricultural. They, too, wished freedom and equality—freedom from oppression and starvation and equality in making laws to guarantee that freedom. Led by such men as Cobbett they were a powerful factor in forcing through political reform; but they were unable to see that the triumph of the middle-class ideas of freedom and equality would not secure them the freedom and equality they craved. Not until the Reform Bill failed to bring the franchise to the working class was it disillusioned.

Before the Reform Bill of 1832 the advance of the middle class had little political result. Practically the only evidence of such advance was the rather wholesale creation and promotion of peerage.³¹ The hostile feelings of both parties to the conflict could only be rendered more acute by such creations and promotions, for the one saw its social prestige threatened and to some extent its political purposes thwarted, the other saw its own members being used against it.

³¹ Robertson, pp. 352–353.

The industrial struggle between the industrial and agricultural laborers on the one hand (although the two bodies were not consciously united until considerably past the period we are studying) and the "masters" on the other was a conflict also by no means new. Passages at arms had taken place in the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries; but there had been as yet no clear and widespread recognition of the diverse interests of employers and employed. Capitalistic industry and the evils which followed it or which it made conspicuous, slowly rendered the divergent interests evident, and brought about ultimately that feeling of solidarity in the laboring and employing classes—a feeling which as the years went by grew more pronounced among the laboring classes but less so among the employing classes as a whole—for of the upper classes through-going reasoners and the philanthropically inclined were more and more disposed to espouse the laborer's cause. There was not only subterranean upward pressure; there was corrosion in the superlying strata. Popular agitators were of all political parties and all classes. Oastler, one of the most fiery, was a Tory and a Churchman.³²

Such was the industrial revolution and its immediate results in the economic and social spheres. At the culmination of that revolution, when society was bewildered by the very recentness and violence of the changes; when the causes were but imperfectly understood because of lack of perspective; when men knew not whether to be exultant or sorrowful over the disruptions they saw about them, and were both—from this seething turmoil of bewilderment the revolution in literature was born. Should we look for the traits of the parent in the child?

³² Hutchins and Harrison, footnote, p. 33.

III. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW LITERATURE

What was the state of English literature at the beginning of the great industrial change which I have, not altogether inadequately, I hope, set forth? Upon this we need not dwell long, for the literature of that time and the forces shaping it have been quite thoroughly studied. It is well known that the eighteenth century was dominated by French influence. Under the ascetic frown of Puritanism all but religious and controversial literature languished, and under the reaction from Puritanism, with a complacent, irreligious or mildly religious nobility, through training and tradition admirers of French culture, and a large portion of the nation—the more moral and serious part—without adequate literary expression, French influence had little to check it. This influence fastened itself upon English literary men all the more readily because French culture was in advance of English culture, and Englishmen who aspired to culture recognized the fact. Be it remembered, moreover, that these literary men catered to a dominating class which admired French ways of doing things, and be it remembered also that the culture of the era was a town culture. Literary men were English town men, hangers-on, when not part, of the nobility. They were content slavishly to import literary manners as well as social manners; and instead of making those manners over to express the national spirit of their own country, they became themselves foreign-hearted, imitated and aped, and aspired to be that which they could not be, and yet regarded themselves with complacency as at the *ne plus ultra* of progress. As a result the literature did not express the nation except upon its most superficial side. It expressed only a limited circle within the nation—the would-be cosmopolitan men-about-town. Pseudo-classicism was not vital as literature, because the national life was not in it; and it was conventional of necessity, not only because it was an imitation twice removed, but because it was the literature of the town, the

home of convention as distinguished from time-honored custom and tradition. It was in large part mere frippery of elegant triflers, of wits who aspired to be clever or "brilliant" rather than profound, who ignored or were ignorant of what England was thinking and feeling. To be polished—that was the thing. England had no business to feel. It was bad form to exhibit real emotion, to be enthusiastic about anything.

Now, regardless of whether this fashion originated in France or not, we can safely affirm that city life tends to repress enthusiasm, tends to make indifference the mode. The city-dweller sees so many curiosities, so many innovations, so many exhibitions of eccentricity or of genius, that in the course of time the expression of surprise comes to be a bore. The city man everywhere is in danger of becoming blasé. With the blasé it is the habit to affect indifference because the indifference surprises others. Probably none of us are entirely free from the vanity of wishing to look apparently unmoved upon spectacles that move others greatly. Once let such indifference be affected by the "leaders about town" as "the thing," and it is eagerly taken up by a society already adapted to it, and accepted as the mode.

Would not, then, we may inquire, the rapid rise of the cities in the eighteenth century further this spirit? We may well regard it as one of the reasons why the revolt, when it did come, met with such fierce opposition, and why the revolt so evidently betook itself to rural life. It will account for certain traits in some who were romantic more through following the fashion than through innate sympathy with the romantic movement. For instance, Trelawney, in his story of the incineration of Shelley and Williams, remarks:

Byron's idle talk during the exhumation of William's remains, did not proceed from want of feeling, but from his anxiety to conceal what he felt from others. . . . He had been taught during his town-life, that any exhibition of sympathy or feeling was maudlin and unmanly, and that the appearance of daring and indifference, denoted blood and high breeding.³³

³³ Trelawny, p. 90.

No doubt this spirit of real and pretended indifference fostered by the cities reappeared again in the vulgarity and triviality and ugliness of British Philistinism, which the great Victorian essayists so mightily bombarded. We must not forget, however, that during the Romantic Revolt this fashion of indifferentism—which is by no means alien to the stolid strain in the British temperament—tired of itself, was counteracted by another and opposite fashion, with which we shall presently have occasion to deal at length.

It is now generally thought, I believe, that the movement known as the Romantic Revolt began far back in the eighteenth century. Mr. Phelps, who has made a special study of the movement, says:

. . . between the years 1725 and 1765 the Romantic movement was a real, if quiet force, and . . . in these forty years may be found the seeds which sprang to full maturity in Scott and Byron, and in all the subsequent Romantic literature of the nineteenth century.³⁴

Now, as already indicated, my view of the movement is somewhat different from that of Mr. Phelps. Romantic traits were never absent from the literature; what Mr. Phelps finds is that these traits become more and more obtrusive as the century wears on, and he chooses to keep the consideration of them wholly or almost wholly in the realm of the esthetic. What is the meaning in practical life, the cause of this increasing obtrusiveness? What indeed but that pseudo-classicism did not meet the needs of a nation awakening again to a vigorous imaginative life? A great industrial change was going on within, accompanied by great social shiftings, uneasiness, discomfort; startling philosophical ideas, which perhaps were prompted by the confusion, but which at any rate found a ready response in the hearts of millions because those millions were troubled by the problems which the social changes presented, came from abroad and from within; the nation was in a ferment; the ferment increased; the expression increased in corresponding ratio. Now the historian look-

³⁴ Phelps, p. vi.

ing back over the literature finds in the literary expressions of the ferment the literature of the Romantic Movement.

It has been observed that, as in this case, romantic outbursts in any literature come at times of great national activity. We may explain this, I presume, by analogy with individuals. Under stress of great emotions, when they forget the parts they are acting before the world—we say, “forget themselves”—persons show what they really are. In such a state they are both more objective and subjective. Emotionally they are living at higher tension, and they project themselves more into objects perceived. Such a state, unless there are counterbalancing circumstances, is highly favorable to art; and where the emotion runs into excess, an extravagant though sincere art.

Such an art develops—or at least it did in this case—in several distinct directions. That is, as I have explained before, certain phases of life, human or universal, certain characteristics of thought and emotion, common, but not common alike, to all periods of human history, are emphasized more and more to the exclusion of others, until the art which is an expression of the life is partly transformed, partly transmuted—I mean, is changed partly in form, partly in substance—into a new art. In this change the principles of chance variation works. Those products of art which most adequately meet the needs of expression are assimilated and imitated, and they in themselves become a new force working to bring about the change.

The phases of national thought and emotion the development of which constitute the Romantic Revolt I group under three main heads: The exaltation of individuality; radicalism; rebellion against the commonplace. The fields represented by these are not to be distinguished absolutely from each other, but they are sufficiently distinguishable for the purposes of analysis. I purpose now to take up in turn each of the several characteristics represented by these heads, and attempt to show wherein and how they were, in great part at least, the result and expression of the industrial revolution and the attendant social readjustments. This is an ambitious project, too ambitious for

me to hope for complete success; but if I bring forward some suggestions helpful in pointing others the way to a more complete analysis, I shall have succeeded up to the measure of my hopes.

1. EXALTATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

(A) *Deepened sentiment*

Nothing is more marked in the literature of the Romantic Revolt than intense subjectivity. The Revolt was both more subjective and objective than pseudo-classicism; for whereas the pseudo-classicist was coldly aloof in tone and preferred to survey objects—except, possibly, the trivial and the coarse—from a distance, the romanticist found himself in every thing accordant with his mood, yet, tingling with the thrill of the discovery, prided himself on painting with his eye upon the object—to give us both the object and the thrill.³⁵ The Romantic Revolt was, therefore, in one of its aspects a triumph of sincerity. Subtly yet surely, between the years 1740 and 1820, the transformation was wrought, and an affected, sophisticated sentimentalism issued in genuine sentiment. In the transformation the poet was transfigured, exalting by his sincerity his own personality.

In the age of Queen Anne a hearty distaste for the zeal of the Puritans, a lack of real culture and refinement, combined with a complacent because superficial intellectualism repressed or refined away the emotions of a dominant class secure in its power; a brutal indifference to correspond to national manners not yet refined, and given free play under cavalier rule, or a lofty indifference to simulate a calm, godlike survey of human vicissitude from a high intellectual eminence—either of these was the order of the day. One could be either a Squire Western or a Bolingbroke, and feel himself in fashion.

³⁵ —Let good men feel the soul of Nature
And see things as they are.

(Wordsworth, *Peter Bell*).

But sentiment always exists. To some degree it is as characteristic of every age in history as of every normal person. It cannot forever be subdued; the most superior cannot always be philosophical. The age that is constrained by fashion to repress its feelings, or which has not a sufficiently eventful life to call forth real emotion, will take refuge in unreal emotion, the simulation of emotion—just as men oppressed by monotony may get drunk in order that they may *live*. *Sentimentalism* offered a way of escape from the dead level of a century in which commonsense and reason were pedestaled and emotion and enthusiasms sent to the rubbish heap. The “sentiment” of sentimentalism was no more sincere than the expression of love of rural life and scenes in eighteenth century pastoralism; to drop the sentimental tear was amusing, a way to dispose of animal spirits effeminated, a novelty to while away tedium. Yet it was a harbinger, a very significant one, of a mighty emotional and intellectual awakening that was to have far-reaching effects practical and esthetic.

If we desire further reasons than these for the existence in English society and literature of the fashion of affecting sentiment, we can find it in the influence of France, so often cited. One critic calls attention to the fact that

Even in the pages of the manlier novelists, we find the embrace—nay, the kiss—a common form of salutation among men; and it was not thought derogatory to their sex for them to shed copious and undissembled tears on learning of some signal act of benevolence or gratitude.³⁶

We can hardly conceive of such practices as native to the imaginations of the sturdy, stoical, undemonstrative Britons.

Why France was afflicted with the fashion does not immediately concern us here. It is interesting to note, however, that, leaving out of consideration the naturally quick sensibilities and demonstrative disposition of a Latin race, the cause appears to be a peculiar economic and social situation. A nobility rich in intellect was divorced from practical affairs, and in default of

³⁶ Millar, p. 166.

anything better to do turned to a contemplation from a safe distance of the desperate condition of the peasantry and to a morbid feeling of its own philanthropic pulse.³⁷

But, however sentimentalism came to be the fashion in England, of one thing we may be certain—it would never have persisted for so many years nor have deepened into genuine sentiment had not the social conditions which resulted from the economic revolution been a compelling force. To Rousseau and the French Revolution we cannot deny influence; yet they did not *make* the Romantic Revolt. They were but storm centers, symbols in the overthrow of an effete civilization and the coming of a new.

An old order of society was passing away; a new order was establishing itself. The economic and social shiftings entailed the destruction of many an ancient landmark, many a pleasant, picturesque, time-hallowed rural custom, wholesale alterations which could be but for the worse to the eye and heart that knew the endearment of long association.

Many precious rites
And customs of our rural ancestry
Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,
Will last for ever.³⁸

—Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the Evening Star
Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
On which it stood; great changes have been wrought
in all the neighbourhood:—yet the oak is left
That grew beside their door; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.³⁹

The increasing obtrusiveness of poverty and wretchedness among the working classes compelled seriousness. As has been

³⁷ Hammond, chap. I.

³⁸ Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Book II. See also Book VIII for a melancholy disquisition on the changes, too long to quote.

³⁹ Wordsworth, *Michael*.

intimated, the chief representatives of the sentimental cult were literati, who had not or did not suffer the woes with which they found it agreeable to sympathize. But as time went on a more serious note crept in, a note sounding not only regret for that which was passing away, but sounding discontent with social conditions. The first unmistakable sounding of that note in poetry came in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, 1770. Goldsmith's affectation of sentiment was sufficient to stir the wrath of the realistic Crabbe, yet though his *Deserted Village* came but two years later than Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, the general tone of his work is much more earnest and sincere. For Goldsmith, although a wit and a man-about-town, is one of the common people, feeling his kinship with the common people. His sensibilities are stirred not only by what he has personally suffered, but by intimate knowledge of the precarious situation of national and social affairs—the widespread suffering among the poor, the continuous impoverishment of the country folk and their exile to the cities or to foreign shores, or their pitiful struggle growing increasingly desperate to maintain their positions in the social scale, the growing insolence of landlordism, the increasing contrast between rich and poor, the increasing wealth, but as rapidly increasing misery, squalor, crime, and vice of the cities:

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
 The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay!
 'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and a happy land.
 Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,

.

 This wealth is but a name
 That leaves our useful products still the same.
 Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
 Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;

.

His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Goldsmith, p. 105.

Most assuredly the sentiment of the *Deserted Village* and the *Traveller*, although so strongly tinctured with the unreality of eighteenth century pastoralism, is much more nearly genuine than that of the sportive, cynical Sterne, or the lachrymose Mackenzie. It is worthy of note too, by the way, that in the passage just quoted there is in essence the doctrine universally or almost universally held by the romanticists of the Revolt; that the end of civilized human activity should be the welfare and happiness of man, individual man.

As we pass on down the century and into the next, and the social situation becomes ever more and more alarming, the tone of sentiment becomes ever more intimate and stern. Cowper, Crabbe, and Burns appear, each with his own individual but sincere note, and then the lava flood of emotion comes pouring forth, more anxious often that it shall utter itself than that its utterance shall have the prescribed conventional forms; nay, vivid emotion spontaneously creates new forms.

For the development of this softening spirit we must not forget to give due credit to the repressed Puritanic element in English society—an element which seems to have corresponded roughly to the middle class. To it also must be given much of the credit for the elevation of the tone of sentiment. It was strongly moralistic. Now the deeply moral man is deeply sentimental. He clings to his ethical dogmas as firmly as to his religion, with which, indeed, they may be almost one; and that art which is most imbued with sentimental devotion to those dogmas calls forth a ready approval and a corresponding emotional response. The first great English sentimentalist, Richardson, catered to this element of English society. He might well be styled the novelist of the Roundheads, just as Fielding was most assuredly the novelist of the Cavaliers. The appearance of Richardson and his followers is evidence that the middle class is rising again in the social scale. Why it was rising our study of the economic revolution has shown.

The sentimental spirit once free to act, and finding the conditions of the time in harmony with it, had a solvent effect both

upon art forms and the subject-matter of art. The sentimentalist was sentimental because he enjoyed it. He was continually looking for the sensational and trying to produce sensations. Richardson gave us the first epistolary novel; Sterne gave us novelistic matter in which conventional form was ignored; the Wartons, Shenstone, and others attempted a revival of older literary forms, into which they poured their affected melancholy and graveyard sentiment; the whole world, past and present and to come, was ransacked to provide causes for emotion, and wit was taxed to find new or new-old forms in which to express emotion.

The transformation of sentimentalism into what I choose to call genuine sentiment was neither sudden nor complete. In its original eighteenth century form of aloofness, abstractness, sentimentalism persisted throughout the Revolt. We find it vitiating much of the work of the minor poets, and cropping out here and there in the work of even the greatest. What of Moore's strained sentiment, for instance, or Shelley's moralistic declamations?—for turgid rhetoric is one mark of moralistic sentimentalism. In some respects Byron, continuing the traditions of the eighteenth century town wits, was the outgrowth and consummation of the spirit. Though in him there is the leaning toward genuine emotion and the free expression of passion, his muse always has one sorrowful eye open to the effect upon the audience; yet it pleases her to try to make the audience believe that the emotion is not lyrical but of a *dramatis persona*. Hence that affectation, which, however, was scarcely felt, if at all, by a generation of readers trained up in sentimentalism of a more insincere brand.

This excess of sentiment which permeated everywhere in English society and softened and refined it more superficially than inwardly, was particularly favorable to a phenomenon that has called for more remark, I believe, than explanation. The great host of women writers that appeared upon the horizon in Johnson's day had been heralded by few women writers of any note in all preceding English literature. The first great triumph achieved by woman in the English literary field was, probably, *Evelina*, published in 1778. Within less than three generations

women were not only flooding the literary market with works as eagerly accepted by the publishers and the public as those by men, but some were occupying positions of first rank as writers, and many of them positions of second rank. The closing years of the eighteenth century gave us Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Hanna Moore, Mary Wollstonecraft, Mrs. Radcliffe, Clara Reeve; the first half of the nineteenth century gave us Susan Ferrier, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Jane Porter, the Brontës, George Eliot, Felicia Hemans, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. What is the explanation of this comparatively swift invasion of the literary lists by women?

The explanation I suggest is this: First, the excess of sentiment of which we have just been speaking gave a feminine tone to society and literature which they had not before possessed. Second, this atmosphere of soft sentiment in which women were particularly adapted to thrive and dominate was vivified by a constantly increasing spirit of democracy. Constant preaching of equality took place in English drawing-rooms. Mary Wollstonecraft, probably the first of the "suffragettes," came forward to maintain the "rights of women"⁴¹ and was the first woman—so she supposed⁴²—to attempt to support herself with her pen. In short, women became more self-assertive; and, backed by the widespread doctrine of the rights of man, which could not logically deny the rights of women to an equal opportunity with men, under the spur of literary genius or ambition, or necessity, produced for the market which sentimentalists had prepared for them. Furthermore, woman's effort to advance was aided by the higher moral tone which (in general) accompanied sentimentalism—for the reason which has just been pointed out.

Curiously enough, we do not find the greatest women writers of the early romantic period professedly belonging to the romantic school. Miss Austen, Fanny Burney, and Susan Ferrier are, rather, professed realists. But a simple explanation of this is

⁴¹ Rauschenbusch-Clough, p. 87.

⁴² Pennell, p. 90.

that women are naturally more conservative than men; they are, moreover, psychologically especially well adapted to minute observation of social manners; and therefore they did their best work in the literary type already in vogue and firmly established. But eventually, in Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, women produced work both romantic and sentimental in the best sense.

(B) *Aroused philanthropic instinct*

Philanthropy, as the derivation of the word indicates, is a force making for democracy, for an augmentation of sympathy with, of feeling for individual peculiarities, rights, and worth. That so-called philanthropy which is purely professional in character, which makes discrimination between classes only and moves solely according to statistics, is not true philanthropy, for it is entirely of the head and not at all of the heart. Roughly, such so-called philanthropy corresponds in abstractness and aloofness to pseudo-classical sentimentalism. Humanitarianism, we may say, is the practical side of sentiment. Whereas sentimentalism is inclined to be abstract, humanitarianism is concrete. In the eighteenth century sentimentalism was mainly confined to literati, a certain class of philosophers, and idlers of fashion; humanitarianism was most fittingly entertained by those who were not only men of sentiment, but men of action as well. The genuine sentimentalist weeps and dreams and weeps, and is pleased; the humanitarian is apt to do more cursing and denouncing than weeping, and then to proceed to inquire, How may this evil be remedied and hereafter avoided?

A humanitarian movement began back in the Queen Anne period, but died away during the reaction. Toward the middle of the eighteenth century, stimulated by the fashion for affecting sensibility, and by the increasing wretchedness which that fashion rendered more conspicuous than otherwise it would have been, it began to revive. To be sure, as Lecky says, there had always been much unobtrusive charity in England,⁴³ but the fashion of

⁴³ Lecky, vol. VI, p. 274.

"sensibility" naturally stimulated it. Practical people who were genuinely sympathetic were stirred to greater activity, and those who were not genuinely sympathetic were compelled by the logic of circumstances to "save their faces," as the Japanese say, by practical demonstration of their tender-heartedness. By the adoption of the fashion for sentiment and its endorsement of the humanitarian movement the ruling class cut the ground from under its own feet. To be aware of others' sufferings, to know that they themselves were, in part at least, the cause, and yet at the same time to be called upon by a prevailing fashion to sympathize openly with those miseries, put the upper strata of society in a quandary. Escape was to be had in at least four ways: By becoming brutally indifferent—which a large part of society already was; through artistic or esthetic indifference, disinterested contemplation of miseries which do not directly concern the artist, with an eye to their esthetic possibilities; through pious indifference, which looks upon suffering as disciplinary; or by becoming an advocate of a new order of things. Sensitive, conscientious men of action, such as Owen, Wilberforce, Howard, Shelley, were driven to the last. Schemes for social betterment were revived, or new ones envolved; and Socialism, as *Socialism*, began—a Socialism, however, puerile because saturated with "sensibility" in one form or another.

In the first class, the brutally indifferent class, we may perhaps with justice rank the genial realist Fielding; for although genial, he was on the whole pleased with society as it was, pleased particularly with his own station in it, and as a typical English aristocrat regarded poverty as a matter of course among a class inferior in every respect to himself.

In the second class, the class addicted to artistic indifference, we may rank Richardson, Sterne, Mackenzie, Beattie, and possibly Goldsmith. Although alive to social inequality, injustice, and oppression, these sentimentalists were not in general averse to society as it was constituted in their day, for did it not furnish an abundance of pathos and picturesque contrast ready to the novelist's or the poet's hand? To be sure, there were the rich

and the aristocratic who were in some instances insolent or harsh, and there were the poor who suffered; but why should it not be so?—it always had been. Even Goldsmith, while he did not share all the complacency of his fellow-sentimentalists, is rather complacent, all things considered, in his indignation, nor does he seem especially zealous for reform. The indignant sentiment expressed in the *Vicar of Wakefield* was directed not against the constitution of society, but against individual oppressors of the poor. It had not dawned upon the English sentimentalists that they were the skirmish line in the great struggle to come, the struggle of the employed against the employing. It is only fair to Goldsmith, however, to admit that in the *Deserted Village*—produced a few years later than the *Vicar*—he comes very close to an open expression of class strife, an expression in which there is little of the tone of complacency:

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade,
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

.
If to the city sped—What waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.

Because of this clear sympathetic exposition of the social situation, Goldsmith's work is more vital than Beattie's, although Beattie's shows all the characteristics of the Romantic Revolt in full flower. Beattie is too much infected with sentimentalism to take the social problems seriously to heart.

In the third class, the piously indifferent, we may place Cowper and Crabbe. Some fifteen years after the publication of the *Deserted Village*, in the verse of Cowper, the would-be piously indifferent, it is evident that the two contending forces

of society are becoming more clearly defined, and that the blame for the increasing wretchedness of the poor is being laid upon commercialism, upon the class dominating now in the industrial revolution:

Man in society is like a flower
 Blown in its native bed; 'tis there alone
 His faculties, expanded in full bloom,
 Shine out; there only reach their proper use.
 But man, associated and leagued with man

 For interest sake . . .
 Like flowers selected from the rest, and bound
 And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
 Fades rapidly, and, by compression marr'd,
 Contracts defilement not to be endured.

 Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
 Against the charities of domestic life,
 Incorporated, seem at once to lose
 Their nature; and, disclaiming all regard
 For mercy and the common rights of man,
 Build factories with blood; conducting trade
 At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
 Of innocent commercial justice red.⁴⁴

About the same time Crabbe, a matter-of-fact eighteenth century realist with a strong humanitarian bias, comes forward with a frank portrayal of the terrible conditions among the poor. Crabbe's work met with such phenomenal success in his time because interest in the struggle of the poor was becoming acute in the public conscience. Crabbe catered to that interest in the only way in which he was capable; he could not soar into dreamland or declaim sentimental philosophy Shelley-like; he was not dissatisfied with the constitution of society; it was farthest from his thoughts to be a rebel. In fact, Crabbe, in so far as he may be considered romantic, is so almost solely through his humanitarian interest.

Both Cowper and Crabbe, although strongly humanitarian, were religious sentimentalists. Naturally the religious revival that had been, and was, going on contributed to the human-

⁴⁴ *The Task*, Book IV, ll. 659-683.

itarian movement. But that it had much to do with that wing of the movement which made an attack upon the social constitution is doubtful. There are indications that such is not the case. Not to Methodism, or Evangelicism, nor Unitarianism do we look for the origin of Socialism, but to philosophical skepticism, represented by such men as Godwin, Paine, Shelley, and Owen. Socialism, except when embraced for a time by certain religious men styling themselves Christian Socialists, has always remained, not necessarily from the nature of its doctrines but in fact, essentially irreligious. The religious sentimentalist is an ally of the dominant class, he deprecates open class struggle, and confines himself to salving the wounds which the struggle, real though veiled, continually rends afresh. Neither Crabbe nor Cowper had any solution to offer for the growing miseries of the poor. Perhaps both thought that their poetic appeals might soften somewhat the hearts of the rich. But both looked upon this world as a vale of tears—merely a place for preparation for the next. They even looked with some complacency upon the miseries of the laboring class as a discipline placed by God for the salvation of the laborer's immortal soul. Said Cowper:

Oh, bless'd effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!
No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine.⁴⁵

Here the basis for praise of poverty is that it, by keeping men in ignorance, keeps them pious. Says Crabbe:

The Poor are here almost of necessity introduced, for they must be considered, in every place, as a large and interesting portion of its inhabitants. I am aware of the great difficulty of acquiring just notions on the maintenance and management of this class of our fellow-subjects, and I forbear to express any opinion of the various modes which have been discussed or adopted.⁴⁶

"Man must endure—let us submit and pray"⁴⁷ is his final word upon the misery which he has portrayed.

⁴⁵ *Truth*, ll. 361 ff.

⁴⁶ Preface to *The Borough*, *Poems*, vol. I, p. 277.

⁴⁷ *Poems*, vol. I, p. 292.

But while esthetic and pious sentimentalists were merely entertaining or consoling themselves, the fourth class, the sensitive, conscientious men, were exerting themselves. They were well aware that however much poverty might be sentimentally extolled as the nurse of piety and morality, grinding poverty was neither; and that an ignorant peasant, well-fed or not, was not likely to be an idyllic personage. Throughout the period practical philanthropic endeavor was extending itself in three ways. Humanitarians were contending for the relief and education of the poor; the reform of the criminal code and the amelioration of the lot of the prisoner; and the abolition of slavery. Howard and Wilberforce and their associates and followers were exceedingly active and aggressive. And why?

Never were the sufferings of the poor more patent to the casual observer. It was impossible that philanthropic and humanitarian schemes should not be in the air. Thinkers were devoting their minds to the new problems which the state of the industrial world required men to face. . . . It was an age of both voluntary and involuntary self-denial. Besides philanthropic schemes for temporary relief there were schemes for educating the poor in habits of thrift, numerous savings-banks and friendly societies were started. The missionary societies renewed their activity: in 1808 the British and Foreign School Society began. Sunday Schools were everywhere established. The suffering of children began to excite sympathy; in 1803 an "Association for improving the situation of Infant Chimney-sweepers" was formed.⁴⁸

Let us now turn to the direct effect of the humanitarian movement upon the Romantic Revolt proper—and by Romantic Revolt proper I mean of the period from 1800 to, say, 1837. Because of the sentimental temper of the age the humanitarian movement was rapidly triumphing at constantly accelerated speed, until the outbreak of the Napoleonic wars. Then the forces of reaction gained the upper hand. The "interests" which had all along opposed the reforms seized the opportunity to turn the spirit of distrust and the spirit of national patriotism which the horrors of the French Revolution and the aggressions of Napoleon had aroused, against the reformers:

⁴⁸ Traill, vol. V, p. 499.

"The blind reaction against all reform which had sprung from the panic lasted on when the panic was forgotten. For nearly a quarter of a century it was hard to get a hearing for any measure which threatened change to an existing institution, beneficial though the change might be. Even the philanthropic movement which so nobly characterized the time found itself checked and hampered by the dread of revolution."⁴⁹

"When Wilberforce began his agitation against the negro slave-trade, he was supported both by the Government and the Opposition. He had against him only the King, the shipowners, and the House of Peers. But when, in 1791, he tried the temper of the nation for the second time, the revulsion had been so great that the champions of the abolition of the slave-trade were almost regarded as Jacobins, and Wilberforce's bill was rejected by a majority of 163 to 88."⁵⁰

"Shaftesbury complained that he could not get the evangelicals to take up the factory movement. They had been the mainstay of the anti-slavery movement, but they did not seem to be troubled about white slavery. The reason, no doubt, was obvious; the evangelicals were mainly of the middle class, and class prejudices were too strong for the appeals to religious principles."⁵¹

Now, there is nothing which can so lend vigor to the spirit of a strong revolt as a strong opposition, provided the opposition be not so strong as to overcome, to crush, the revolt. Here we have the reason why the Romantic Revolt, which embodied the humanitarian movement in its own spirit and materials, and whose representatives were almost to a man strongly humanitarian, came in full force in those twenty years following the Napoleonic wars, every phase of the romantic spirit being intensified.⁵² In those twenty years Byron and Shelley, each in his own way, represent the culmination in literature of the humanitarian and sentimental movements. In these poets the two movements conjoin. To be sure, these poets, especially

⁴⁹ Green, vol. IV, p. 315.

⁵⁰ Brandes, vol. IV, p. 27.

⁵¹ Leslie Stephen, vol. III, p. 178.

⁵² But all was quieted by iron bonds
Of military sway. The shifting aims,
The moral interests, the creative might,
The varied functions and high attributes
Of civil action, yielded to a power
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.
—In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;
The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced;
And, from the impulse of a just disdain,
Once more did I retire into myself.
(Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book III).

Byron, were individualistic; but they read the universe of man into themselves. They presented in highly egotistic form the griefs of all mankind. Mankind universal could not well be otherwise presented in an age when individualism was to the fore.

In truth there should be no real conflict between altruism and individualism. This the romanticists of the period knew. What they desired passionately was the highest development of the individual, but they conceived very rightly that this could be brought about only through the highest development possible to all. But the highest development of all, they premised, can be accomplished only through the sacrifice on the part of those who have the greater share of economic goods. Now the humanitarians—those who were willing to make this sacrifice—were precisely of this class. Hence the close relations between humanitarianism and the movements romantic and socialistic. As Le Rossignol says, "Humanitarianism is non-economic, and even anti-economic, in its character. Socialism itself, as a system of thought and as a social movement, has proceeded from the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, to whose economic interests it is bitterly opposed."⁵³

(c) *Dominance of the doctrines of individualism*

The decay of feudalism was marked by an increased feeling for the worth of the individual and a heightened sense of national unity. Nationalism may be considered as an early manifestation of the individualization of society, which affected most apparently first the larger units—the nations. The use of the vernacular and the rise of the vernacular literatures were doubtless furthered by the rise of the free towns, and the consequent rise in the social scale of the burghers. Patriotism was nurtured by the economic struggle, accentuated by military warfare, between the burghers of the various countries. The rise of the trading classes brought commercialism into prom-

⁵³ Le Rossignol, pp. 90-91.

inence; and the spirit of commercialism is essentially individualistic, however much it may favor combination for the purpose of furthering its own ends.

I do not say that the doctrines of individualism owe their origin to economic conditions. It would be unsafe to assert such to be the case; for, like almost all other doctrines, we should probably find that they could be traced back to a time when their origin was necessarily obscure; but what I do assert is that the economic conditions at the break-up of feudalism favored the extension of the doctrines, and that the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century brought them to the fore as rapidly as it itself transformed society. In what ways, we are to inquire, did the industrial revolution favor the individualistic attitude?

The great shifting of population from locality to locality, and from trade to trade, was a fitting prelude for a great shift in habits of thought. Nothing is more apt to develop the quality of self-reliance than a change of environment and occupation, which bring out faculties that have lain dormant or have atrophied under the regime of the habitual. Under the old order, in which the son followed the father in his occupation, doing the same thing in the same way, where the economic life was closely regulated by the guild, or the community, or by tradition, original initiative, quick adaptation, and high intelligence that could be turned to economic account were not at a premium. We cannot doubt many who were compelled by force of circumstances or need of bread, or who were lured by hopes of gain to change their occupation or places of habitation, or both, found themselves, discovered in themselves, as over against the other units of a society of "free competition," qualities and capabilities of which they had not even dreamed. Furthermore, the ever increasing competition, with its accompanying kaleidoscopic changes in industry and society, quickened the national pulse. This means that the pulse of individual life was quickened. Englishmen, either through necessity or contagion, were more alive, more imaginative, more self-assertive.

In the city the industrial pulse beats quickest; consequently the increase of population in the cities supported the movement. While, to be sure, city life is said to refine the individual by social contact, that is, to make men less individual in social manners, more ready to conform in external behavior, it nevertheless encourages a certain quality of selfishness somewhat foreign to the rural districts. In the city the economic struggle is more obviously between individual men; in the country it is more obviously between man and nature. The denizen of the city more readily than he of the country comes to regard the world as his oyster; but while that conviction promotes a certain admirable persistency, the persistency must often be against the best interests of others. No condition is more favorable to a certain kind of individualism than long-continued conflict against other individuals. Furthermore, nowhere is there more reward for the person of superior talents than in the city, and nowhere is the struggle between those possessed of talent fiercer.

The spread of city culture to the country carried somewhat of this individualistic spirit. And where the spirit of the modern city goes, the communistic spirit dies out. Sighs Cowper:

The town has tinged the country; and the stain
Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,
The worse for what it soils. The fashion runs
Down into scenes still rural; but, alas!
Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now.⁵⁴

We may be sure that part of the falling off in rustic manners was in the matter of communistic helpfulness. A similar urbanizing of the country has taken place here in America. The neighborly helpfulness and comparatively close-knit social relations of the settlers are by no means so common among their descendants. The change is summed up in the expression with which those of us who have been brought up in the country are familiar: "In those days people were glad to help each other; now if you get any help, you have to pay for it."

⁵⁴ *The Task*, Book IV, ll. 553 to 557.

The loss of independence or semi-independence, on the part of the freeholders, the common-field villagers, and the artisans contributed to the cry for individual freedom. Liberty is never so dear as when lost. Besides, the loss occurred in a sentimental age, when it would be most harped upon. The increased notice accorded to the dependent, the poor, the enslaved, by the sentimentalists and the humanitarians, assisted the movement by constantly raising the estimate placed upon human life and liberty.⁵⁵

The spirit and the doctrines of equality owed much of their diffusion to the dominance of commercial aims. Eighteenth century commercial England was wedded to competition. The philosophy of competition is comprised mainly in the notion, whether formulated or not, of the survival of the fittest, the necessity of struggle between individuals, the beneficence of equality of opportunity—which means nothing but that the rules of the game shall permit the best man to win. The beneficial results, in increase of product and quality, of competition were obvious on all hands. Necessity of competing was the mother of invention. Competition was literally the life of trade in a day when every improvement in manufacture brought about a more than corresponding expansion in the demand. Competition in an avid market means not necessarily loss to the one who is undersold in that market or whose product is improved upon. Those who were commercially minded were well disposed, therefore, to doctrines which embraced freedom to exploit labor in producing for an expanding market, doctrines inherited from the struggles for civil liberty and religious purity, and found to work so beneficently in the interests of the middle class. While the application industrially of those doctrines was more immediately disastrous

55

He, whose soul
Ponders this true equality, may walk
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;
Yet, in that meditation, will he find
Motive to sadden grief, as we have found;
Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
And for injustice grieving, that hath made
So wide a difference between man and man.

(Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Book IX).

to labor than to capital, the doctrines were the heritage of the laborers as well, and the laborers, especially the superior among them, have been loath to give them up.

The breaking-down of social tradition was another potent agent in the movement toward equality.⁵⁶ The new aristocracy of wealth which the industrial revolution had created could command respect only on the score of its wealth and worth. Although the difference in point of material possessions between the new master and the man might be vast as compared with the difference between master and man in the semi-feudal regime, the social difference, since hereditary honor did not enter, was not so great. Whether the new aristocracy gave itself the airs of the nobility to impress the workman, or fraternized with him with or without condescension, the result was the same—the man felt himself the equal of the master. The effect could only be somewhat disastrous to the prestige of the whole of the aristocracy, patrician or plebeian; which effect was intensified by wealth buying its way into the peerage and by the impoverishment of nobility and gentry in mad effort to keep pace in luxury with the new aristocracy.

In the country the loss of respect for rank which came with the parvenus and the spectacle of the gentry impoverishing itself by reckless expenditure, was furthered by the fashion adopted by the country nobility and gentry, of spending a large part or the whole of its time in London. The absentee landlord who has no interest in his tenants beyond the money he can get from them to spend in the city, is not likely to command their personal loyalty nor a large measure of their esteem.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Coleridge, vol. VI, p. 182. He regrets the decay of "ancient feeling of rank and ancestry" which would be a counter-check to the commercial spirit. But did not the commercial spirit produce that very decay?

⁵⁷ "Mr. Hanway, in his strictures on the causes of dissoluteness, which prevail among the lower classes of people, laments that the number of country gentlemen is so much reduced, that they can no longer form a body of reserve to defend the cause of virtue, or furnish the means of its defence; he asks, what is the situation of a free people, when a gentleman of education, of five hundred or one thousand a year, who should be one of their chief guardians, brings himself and family into an expence which requires three times his income; he who might be a

But perhaps the most powerful factor of all in the dissemination of the doctrines of equality was the struggle of the middle class for representation in Parliament. The form of government was constitutional, but not yet as representative as it was destined to become. The Lords held the balance of power, but were weakening. The triumph of constitutional principles—so far as the middle class was concerned—did not come in England until 1832; the same causes which operated to check the humanitarian advance operated to postpone the day when the middle class should come into its own. The fight was bitter—a frightened but tenacious nobility and conservative element on one side, on the other a Jacobinical middle class and a discontented machine-breaking, rick-burning proletariat imbued with notions of the sacredness of individual right and the injustice of class privileges.

With the loss of the rights of freeholders, the breaking-up of guild control, and the depopulation of the villages, the trend of government was more and more toward centralization. This further accounts for the growth of national spirit. Says the Earl of Carrington:

Common-field Agriculture was a survival of customs and institutions which had grown up when each village lived its life to a great extent in isolation. It was necessary that the villager should almost forget that sovereign in his own demesne, and look down on what the world calls greatness, is now lost in the mass of splendid vanity, and bewildered in trifles.

“With reason might this worthy philanthropist make the foregoing remark; from this cause no inconsiderable degree of the dissoluteness which prevails in the country arises; good examples are of great force, and such the country stands in need of; were the examples which the clergy set in private life, equally moral as their exhortations to their parishioners from the pulpit, even in that case the instances of moral conduct among the class of society to which the labourer looks up with respect, would not be sufficient; they want stronger incitements, and a greater number of respectable examplers; their immediate paymasters and employers are not sufficiently raised above them, and too much mix with them in concerns of interest, to be respected as patrons; it is the hospitable country gentleman, the respected magistrate, who understands, and is attentive to their real interests, that are wanted, as constant house-keepers, in the country; but the presence of such at their country residences cannot be commanded, and will not be voluntarily accorded, unless our huge overgrown metropolis, resembling the poet’s greatness, void of wisdom, should meet with the same fate, and

Fall by its own weight.”

(Ruggles, vol. II, pp. 5 to 7).

he was a Little Pendlingtonian to realize that he was an Englishman. Village patriotism had to die down temporarily to make way for national patriotism; and when the spirit died out of the Village Community its form could not be preserved.⁵⁸

But with the change from local control to national, assertion of individuality was favored. The remoteness of the national, as compared with local government, gives rise, except in a strict bureaucracy, to a corresponding slackness of control over the individual as individual. In his famous speech on taxation of America, Burke pointed out with respect to the colonies, that the more remote the seat of government from the governed, the feebler the pulse of power; so we may say that the removal of local control in favor of national was followed by a less strict supervision over the acts of the individual. National laws will of necessity be more general, and their application more general. National laws, furthermore, must be framed to meet the needs of the nation as a whole, and must ignore the community except in so far as it may be merely one of the units in the national aggregation. Medieval restrictions upon trade, which were a mark of communal spirit, were forced to give way.

With so many causes favoring, is it any cause for wonder that out of the thought and passion of that time sprang doctrines of extreme individualism—the doctrines of anarchy, for instance?

The effect of all this upon the literature is clearly apparent to every student of the romantic movement. The literature of the Romantic Revolt proper was nothing if not individualistic.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Slater, Intro., p. xii.

⁵⁹ —the heart of man is set to be
 The center of this world, about the which
 Those revolutions of disturbances
 Still roll; where all the aspects of misery
 Predominate; whose strong effects are such
 As he must bear, being powerless to redress;
*And that unless above himself he can
 Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man!*
 (Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book IV).
 The feeling heart, the searching soul,
 To thee I dedicate the whole!
 And while within myself I trace
 The greatness of some future race,

The characteristic evinces itself in the wonderful variety of literary form and the freedom from literary conventions; in the subject-matter, wherein the doctrines of the eighteenth century philosophers with such strong emphasis upon individual right play so important a part, wherein the striving after the remote and picturesque reflect individual caprice, wherein the personal ego of the writer is so often unreservedly set forth; in the display of individual style; and, lastly, in the characters of the literary men themselves, with their individuality in so many instances carried to the point of real or affected eccentricity. Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, Landor, Hazlitt, Hunt, Lamb: what picturesque, what "individual" personalities!

2. EXCESSIVE RADICAL SPIRIT

The radical spirit—a disposition to break away from established institutions and dogmas—exhibited itself in both politics and religion. In the political field—possibly because that field had only so recently, through the tolerance engendered by religious indifference and the sapping of dogma by science, been rendered distinct from the religious—the radical spirit shows itself much more homogeneous in character; the sorting into types had just begun. In the religious field, on the other hand, differentiation was nearer complete, and some half-dozen fairly distinct types of revolutionary religious beliefs may be distinguished, ranging from Evangelicism to atheism.

Let us consider first political radicalism.

It seems inevitable that in taking account of any aspect of the temperament of the time, we must notice the effect of the rise of cities. The concentration of great masses of laboring men, discontented, fast becoming conscious of their own interests as distinct from the interests of the employing class, with wits

Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
The present works of present man—
A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile.
(Coleridge, *Ode to Tranquility*).

sharpened by the industrial and social shifting they had undergone, disciplined in organization by the division of labor, breathing an air saturated with the philosophy of individualism, could not but act as a solvent upon hitherto fixed political and social ideas. Lecky remarks:

In England the growing influence of great towns is shown in a gradual modification of the type and habits of political thought. When opinions are formed and discussed by great masses of men, and especially by men of the artisan class, when they are constantly made the subjects of debate before large and popular audiences and in a spirit of fierce controversy, the empire of habit, tradition, and reverence will naturally diminish; anomalies and irregularities of all kinds will be keenly felt; institutions will be judged only by their superficial aspects and by their immediate and most obvious consequences; remote and indirect consequences, however real and grave, will have little influence on opinion; nothing that is complex or subtle in its character and nothing that is not susceptible of an immediate popular and plausible treatment is regarded; and the appetite for experiment, for change, for the excitement of political agitation, steadily grows. The alteration of mental habits partly due to the great increase of town life, and partly also to other causes, may, I think, be clearly traced, stealing over the English character. The political pulse beats more quickly. A touch of fever has passed into the body politic, and the Constitution is moving more rapidly through its successive phases of transformation and of decay.⁶⁰

But discontent and political instability were not confined exclusively to the cities. The condition of affairs in the rural districts was as favorable to these phenomena. As we have seen, there was a continual expropriation in one form or another of the peasantry and yeomanry, and continually an appropriation of the land by the few. There is nothing which makes men more conservative than landholding. The possession of land fixes men to the soil, so to speak—gives them a sense of security, of responsibility, and a permanent symbol about which associations may cluster. Loyalty to the plot of land which has been possessed or tilled for generation after generation by their forefathers begets in men extreme loyalty to those institutions that guarantee the possession or tillage of that land. But when those institutions no longer could guarantee security, when they even

⁶⁰ Lecky, vol. VI, p. 228.

appeared to guarantee instability by upholding the powers that worked for instability, necessarily loyalty to the governing class declined. The Briton's stolid satisfaction in his institutions as the best that can be devised was shaken. New theories, new expedients, proposals for new institutions, more readily gained a hearing. The time was ripe for social and political upheaval: industrialism set the example; for as Marx says:

Constant revolution in production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation, distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify.⁶¹

There is at least one more way in which the industrial revolution contributed to political dissatisfaction. The increase of population in the towns had been at the expense of the villages. Representation in Parliament, however, remained the same, regardless of the change. This situation kept the balance of power in the hands of the landed gentry. The result was, of course, discontent within the towns, particularly among the wealthy middle class, which joined radicalism in its cry for brotherhood—although, as after events showed, it was probably no more consistent and sincere in the latter than it was in the case of those southern slave-holding commissioners who signed the Declaration of Independence.

The movement for equality of representation was repressed in England by the same causes which checked kindred movements. The opposition, not being able to crush, only embittered the radicals; but the dread of revolution kept the conservatives in control until the overwhelming defeat in 1832. Then radicalism was triumphant—so far as the middle class was concerned. But the end was not yet. The lower classes, which had been on the side of the middle class in the struggle, found themselves yet suffering the same inequalities. Extreme radicalism espoused the cause of these lower classes—and the result we recognize today as Socialism.

⁶¹ Marx, p. 492.

I do not mean to say that Socialism originated in the eighteenth century radicalism but that eighteenth century radicalism was its immediate protagonist. Socialistic doctrines may be traced back to Plato. They had been particularly rife at the time of the English Revolution, and found expression in the tenets and proposals of the Levelers. Winstanley, one of the leaders of the Digger Movement (1649), asks:

Was the Earth made for to preserve a few covetous, proud men to live at ease, and for them to bag and barn up the treasures of the Earth from others, that these may beg or starve in a fruitful land; or was it made to preserve all her children? Let Reason and the Prophets' and Apostles' writings be judge, the Earth is the Lord's, it is not to be confined to particular interests. . . . Did the light of Reason make the Earth for some men to engross up into bags and barns, that others might be oppressed with poverty?⁶²

Therefore, if the rich still hold fast to this propriety of Mine and Thine, let them labor their own lands with their own hands. And let the common people, that say the earth is *ours*, not *mine*, let them labor together, and eat bread together upon the commons, mountains, and hills.⁶³

These ideas of equality were taken up with enthusiasm by philosophical sentimentalists, or sentimental philosophers, and made great headway during the eighteenth century, particularly in France. But in England these philosophic-utopists were never strong enough to gain the sovereignty, principally, I suspect, because of the natural conservatism and caution of the British temperament—its proneness to be ruled by the fact rather than the idea; and the doctrines failed in both countries of practical application on any very large scale, partly because they were visionary, partly because the philosophic-utopists were themselves of the middle class and nobility, and, for the most part, concerned more about inequalities in rank than inequalities in wealth. In fact, most of them had no ideas of "elevating the masses" to sovereign power, and their desire for equality of rank and property was not logical and thoroughgoing.

⁶² Berens, p. 76.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

But there are really no classes, strictly speaking, of men; there are only individuals. The class is an abstract idea designating in a vague way, more or less, those individuals who have an interest, or what not, in common, in distinction from other individuals who do not have such interest. These classes as we meet them in practical life are never actually distinct, unless it be in countries extremely caste-ridden. Hence the inevitable spread of ideas of equality till they apply to the mass of mankind, though originally they were meant to apply to certain exceptions in the mass. Logic is inexorable in pushing a general statement such as is implied in "Liberty of Man," "Age of Reason," etc., when once the idea is received into popular faith. It is, then, from this dissemination among the lower classes of the doctrines of radicalism by the logicians and sentimentalists of the upper classes that Socialism proper has come.

The so-called Lake School, with Scott, constituted the conservative element within the revolt. Scott was a consistent Tory throughout the period of the French Revolution, and in 1823 still looked with suspicion and disfavor upon innovations in politics. He is the single exception to the rule that the great romanticists were radicals. He was conventional by temperament and training, discountenancing social and political change and enthusiasm in religion; antiquarian interests and the spirit of the time appear to have made him a great romancer. Southey and Coleridge, it will be remembered, were in youth ardent democrats, with a leaning toward pantheism and free-thinking in religion; but as the years went on their enthusiasm declined. Both became good conservatives, Southey accepting the laureateship, and Coleridge thanking God "for the constitutional and ancestral Church of England."⁶⁴ Wordsworth suffered a similar change of heart, as recorded in the *Prelude*. All three were regarded as renegades by the more thoroughgoing of the romanticists. Critics of the present day, however, are not disposed to impugn their motives, but regard their changes of attitude as the result of years of experience acting upon their naturally conservative

⁶⁴ Coleridge, vol. VI, p. 105. *

British temperaments. That all (with the exception of Scott) of these born conservatives should have been carried away for a time by the radical spirit bears witness to the kinship and, in general, identity of the radical and romantic tempers among imaginative men.

There is a parallel between the radical political movement and the romantic movement in literature that is worth noting. In the first part of the eighteenth century, and even far past the middle, although there were attacks upon the rights of property, and frequent disquisitions upon freedom, equality, etc., all primarily socialistic in nature, yet it is doubtful whether those who were noisiest in attack and disquisition realized the practical bearing of their theories and demands. Probably, down deep within their hearts, few of the sentimental philosophers expected or hoped a practical outcome. To theorize in the abstract, that was the grand thing; and actual social leveling whereby the scavenger should be made the social equal of the lord, was not desired as an actuality. This state of affairs was even more true of France, where utopian philosophy has always been more at home because there the idea may so easily dominate over the fact. The social movement so far was unconscious. Now, as to the parallel, although the romantic program in literature was expressed in part by various writers identified with the beginning of the revolt (Young and the Wartons, for instance), the allegiance to the principles on the part of their authors was half-hearted, very little regarded in practice, and, on the whole, disregarded by those who upheld the old regime. Young, the Wartons, Shenstone, Gray, Collins, Beattie, Cowper, and the rest were restive under the constraint of pseudo-classicism, but not one of them knew exactly what was the matter with literary practice, and probably not one of them dreamed of the romantic literature to come. Not until the very end of the century and the beginning of the nineteenth, when the social movement with which we now identify political radicalism, namely, Socialism, led by such men as Babeuf, Owen, and Fourier, was beginning to emerge as a movement apart, did romanticism become fully conscious of itself.

Turning now to the sister radicalism, the radical spirit in religion, we may, as observed heretofore, distinguish various degrees or grades. There is a right and a left. On the right are Evangelicism, Methodism, Unitarianism; on the left, pantheism, deism, agnosticism, atheism. The order of naming represents the degree of departure from the orthodox.

The conditions which initiated the spirit of religious revolt are well known. The age of Queen Anne was not one of strong religious passion, the dominating party not even particularly moralistic. Puritanism had passed from power amid execration and derision. The nation as a whole was prosperous, as we saw in our survey of the industrial conditions at the opening of the eighteenth century, and the class in power was entirely too comfortable and complacent to be greatly exercised over the welfare of the soul. The established church was notoriously lax in its discipline, and even the sturdy but prosperous non-conformists were steadily relaxing in their zeal. But of course there was an element not satisfied with this spiritual deadness, an element which chafed under the restraint imposed by a dull, platitudinous, conventional, effete religion. An outlet for the dammed-up emotion offered itself in Methodism, and one can understand something of the height to which the flood had risen before the dam broke by the excesses of the "howling" Methodists, who shocked the "reasonable" religionists of the established order of things.

What were the conditions especially favoring religious revolt? We have already noticed one, a very important one—the repression of emotional utterance, a repression that succeeded upon the repression of the Puritans and the attendant decline of religious zeal. The discountenancing or crushing out of social amusements among the Puritans themselves had but added to the emotional tension. The social shifting incident to the industrial revolution, with the consequent formation of a new industrial proletariat and an impoverished rural proletariat, placed now a large portion of the population beyond the reach of the aristocratic, inactive national church. And, above all, the doctrines of the new religious revival (1740–1820) was par-

ticularly well adapted to the spirit of the times, evinced by its rapid and phenomenally widespread progress.⁶⁵ It emphasized individuality and activity, two tenets especially fitted for acceptance in a commercial age. To be sure, the Calvinism which Methodism in part supplanted was also individualistic; but Calvinism, while concentrating attention upon the individual as the son of a favoring God, begets passivity rather than activity. A "be damned if you do, and be damned if you don't" doctrine can in the long run engender little else. But Methodism added to the individualism of Calvin the idea of personal activity as only less supremely important than grace. With Methodism the faith is not exactly "God helps them who helps themselves," yet it is something like "They help themselves whom God helps." Justification of faith by works is a favorite thought with the Methodist. He is certain that the two, works and grace, go together; and that he cannot retain the latter without producing the former. He regards himself as a brother in Christ to all mankind, and loves to dwell most upon Christ in his human, ministerial relations, as a missionary among men. Such a doctrine attracted especially those religious by nature, who mayhap were already touched by the philosophical doctrines of brotherhood and equality, who were distressed in one way or another by the industrial changes and inoculated with the fever which the ever-quickening industrial revolution was engendering on every hand. In short, it was a religious faith adapted to the common people—the lower middle classes and the proletariat—and its growth is symptomatic of an uplift and aspiration of the lower strata of society.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ The Methodist movement gained ground rapidly, making the most rapid advance in those years when the industrial revolution was nearing its completion, and the Romantic Revolt was at its height. "From the parliamentary return of 1853 . . . it appears that while in the decennial period from 1731-40 the number of meeting-houses registered was only 448, in the period from 1791 to 1800 the number rose to 4,394; from 1801 to 1810, to 5,460; and from 1811 to 1820, to 10,161; making 20,015 in thirty years." (Traill, vol. V, p. 240).

⁶⁶ "They [the Methodists] never stop for the distinctions of the understanding, and have thus got the start of other sects, who are so hemmed in with the necessity of giving reasons for their opinions, that they cannot get on at all. 'Vital Christianity' is no other than an attempt to lower all religion to the level of the capacities of the lowest of the people." (Hazlitt, vol. I, p. 60).

Methodism did not trouble itself much with the abstract; neither was it artistic in spirit. The only great literary artist whose inspiration we can attribute in any great degree to the religious revival was Cowper. Cowper, however, belonged to the Evangelical party, which represents the imaginative but most conservative side of the movement. The Evangelicals disapproved of the unrestrained enthusiasm of the Wesleyans:

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt:
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband.⁶⁷

Evangelicism was so Calvinistic that while in sympathy with philanthropic schemes, it was by the doctrine of original sin repressed into moderation in its hopes and activities. Methodism, on the other hand, was fired with enthusiasm for salvation of self. It was individualistic, but practical and busied with concrete problems of social as well as individual salvation, therefore strongly humanitarian in tendency; and it attracted those of religious temper who were individualistic, practical, humanitarian.

A far more liberal movement than either Evangelicism or Methodism was Unitarianism, representative of a class too nearly unemotional to be religious enthusiasts, too intellectual to accept orthodoxy, too businesslike and scientific to be patient with a complex theology, yet too conservative to be willing to break entirely with received religious ideas and institutions. One can see at once the connection of this religious movement with the industrial and social situation and the general temper of the times.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Cowper, *The Progress of Error*, ll. 470-475.

⁶⁸ "Their true designation [Unitarians], which simply expresses a fact admitted on all sides, would be that of Psilanthropists, or assertors of the mere humanity of Christ. It is the interest of these to speak of the Christian religion as comprised in a few plain doctrines, and containing nothing not intelligible, at the first hearing, to men of the narrowest capacities.

[Speaking of the Unitarian creed] There is one class of men who read the Scriptures, when they do read them, in order to pick and choose

Extreme religious radicalism, the radicalism of the left, is more closely associated with the radical spirit in politics than the other 'isms we have just now been considering. All the conditions which contributed to political radicalism contributed to it. The increasing misery of the poor, the rise of heartless but successful corporations, the acute consciousness of unjust social inequalities, the stimulation of scientific inquiry which the industrial revolution entailed, the disturbing and corrupting influence of great material prosperity were conducive to the downfall of faith in an overruling providence, in the efficacy of established religious institutions, in the efficacy of the old creeds. In other words, it was conducive to agnosticism, materialism, and open atheism. This decay of religious belief did not fail to react upon that which induced it; it created class bitterness, and continually sharpened it. Le Bon calls our attention to the fact that:

The distance created by birth, it was then considered [that is, prior to the rise of modern democracy], could not be bridged over. It was the result of the Divine will, and was accepted without discussion. Violent abuses might sometimes give rise to revolts, but the people revolted solely against the abuses, and not against the established order of things. Today it is quite otherwise. The people revolt not against the abuses, which were never less than at present, but against the whole social system.⁶⁹

So we see that the extreme of radicalism in religion goes hand in hand with the radical spirit in politics. It is so today. Socialism is, although its fundamental doctrines do not require

their faith: or (to speak more accurately) for the purpose of plucking away live-asunder, as it were from the divine organism of the Bible, textuary morsels and fragments for the support of doctrines which they had learned beforehand from the higher oracle of their own natural common-sense.

[Note to above]. Whether it be on the increase, as a sect, is doubtful. But it is admitted by all—nay, strange as it may seem, made a matter of boast,—that the number of its secret adherents, outwardly of other denominations, is tenfold greater than that of its avowed and incorporated followers. And truly in our cities and great manufacturing and commercial towns, among lawyers and such of the tradesfolk as are the ruling members in bookelubs, I am inclined to fear that this has not been asserted without good ground." (Coleridge, vol. VI, pp. 187-192).

⁶⁹ Le Bon, p. 333.

it, essentially irreligious. To it, as to the radicalism of the eighteenth century, the church is the upholder of tyranny: then ecclesiasticism was conceived to be on the side of king and tyrannous nobility; now the Church is conceived as a "police institution for upholding capital," and deceiving the common people with "a 'cheque payable in heaven,' " and deserving to perish.⁷⁰

What effect had the presence and growth of this radical spirit upon literature? If we examine the works of the writers that most evidently belong in some way to the eighteenth century romantic movement, we shall find, I believe, that radicalism in one form or the other (political or religious), or both, is apparent in the majority of them. In the beginning of the movement the traces of radicalism are comparatively faint. It appears to owe its origin to pseudo-classic pastoralism galvanized into life by sentimental philosophy and the humanitarian spirit. The first warning of the coming tide was perhaps in the deepened interest in real country life. Ambrose Philips' *Pastorals* (1709), Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* (1725), Thomson's *Winter* (1726) had some sympathetic delineation of country life, with, however, little hint of radical views. In his *Winter*, it is true, Thomson, in addition to appreciation of the beauty of rural scenery, shows himself aware of the misery to be found amid the beauty:

Ah, little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;

.

. . . How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierced by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty . . . , etc.⁷¹

There is a passage in Robert Blair's *Grave* (a poem published in 1743, but probably written a number of years earlier) which reminds us by its melancholy recognition of the vanity of human

⁷⁰ Schäffle, p. 116.

⁷¹ Chalmers, vol. 12, p. 448.

social distinctions at once of Burn's *For A' That*, Byron's *Darkness, A Dream*, and Bryant's *Thanatopsis*:

Here, too, the petty tyrant,
Whose scant domains geographer ne'er notie'd,
And well for neighbouring grounds, of arm as short,
Who fix'd his iron talons on the poor,
And grip'd them like some lordly beast of prey;
Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger,
And piteous plaintive voice of Misery;
(As if a slave was not a shred of Nature,
Of the same common nature with his lord;)
Now tame and humble, like a child that's whipp'd,
Shakes hands with dust, and calls the worm his kinsman;
. . . Under ground
Precedency's a jest; vassal and lord,
Grossly familiar, side by side consume.⁷²

In Collins the radical spirit appears only in the praise of republics in the *Ode to Liberty* (1746)—however, in no evident connection with pastoralism:

See, small Marino joins the theme,
Tho' least, not last in thy esteem.
Strike, louder strike th' ennobling strings
To those whose merchant sons were kings;
To him who, deck'd with pearly pride,
In Adria weds his green-hair'd bride.
Hail, port of glory, wealth, and pleasure!
Ne'er let me change this Lydian measure,
Nor e'er her former pride relate
To sad Liguria's bleeding state.
Ah no! more pleas'd thy haunts I seek,
On wild Helvetia's mountains bleak
(Where, when the favor'd of thy choice,
The daring archer, heard thy voice,
Forth from his eyrie rous'd in dread,
The rav'ning eagle northward fled):
Or dwell in willow'd meads more near,
With those to whom thy stork is dear.⁷³

Faint dawnings of the spirit appear in Gray's *Elegy* (1751), in the acknowledgement of the equality of ability, as contrasted with inequality of opportunity, of plebe and patrician:

⁷² Chalmers, vol. 15, p. 64-65.

⁷³ Collins, p. 47.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
 And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad; nor circumscrib'd alone
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
 Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
 Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.⁷⁴

There is here more than a faint thunder peal of the approaching storm.

The signs of storm are more marked in Goldsmith's *Traveller*, (1764), and still more marked in the *Deserted Village* (1770), while in the *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) we have this evidence of how acute and widespread radicalism was becoming: Dr. Primrose had just been imposed upon by the servants who are loud in their demands for liberty. The doctor replies:

I am for liberty, that attribute of God! Glorious liberty! that theme of modern declamation. I would have all men kings. I would be a king myself. We have all naturally an equal right to the throne: we are all originally equal. This is my opinion, and was once the opinion of a set of honest men who were called Levellers. They tried to erect themselves into a community, where all should be equally free. But, alas! it would never answer; for there were some among them stronger, and some more cunning than others, and these became masters of the rest; for as sure as your groom rides your horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, so surely will the animal that is cunninger or stronger than he, sit upon his shoulders in turn.⁷⁵

Goldsmith's radicalism was typically British, as it was only half-hearted. The sentimental and the practical came into conflict, and the practical won:

And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
 The rabble's rage, the tyrant's angry steel;

⁷⁴ Gray, *Elegy*.

⁷⁵ Goldsmith, p. 33.

Thou transitory flower, alike undone
 By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
 Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
 I only would repress them to secure:
 For just experience tells, in every soil,
 That those who think must govern those that toil;
 And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
 Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
 Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
 Its double weight must ruin all below.⁷⁶

Even the fastidious, aristocratic dabbler in romanticism.
 Horace Walpole, was touched by the spirit:

Letter to Sir Horace Mann. May 26, 1762.

You may imagine that I am anxious to have the Peace, and to see Mr. Conway safe in England. I wish it privately and publicly—I pray for an end to the woes of mankind; in one word, I have no public spirit, and don't care a farthing for the interests of the merchants. Soldiers and sailors who are knocked on the head, and peasants plundered or butchered, are to my eyes as valuable as a lazy luxurious set of men, who hire others to acquire riches for them; who would embroil all the earth, that they may heap or squander; and I *dare* to say this, for I am no minister . . . I am a bad Englishman, because I think the advantages of commerce are dearly bought for some by the lives of many more. This wise age counts its merchants, and reckons its armies ciphers. But why do I talk of this age?—every age has some ostentatious system to excuse the havoc it commits. Conquest, honour, chivalry, religion, balance of power, commerce, no matter what, mankind must bleed, and take a term for a reason. 'Tis shocking.⁷⁷

Chatterton, the impetuous and daring, as well as “wonderful” boy ranges himself (in 1769–70) on the side of both political and religious free-thinking:

Alas! America, thy ruined cause
 Displays the ministry's contempt of laws.
 Unrepresented thou art taxed, excised,
 By creatures much too vile to be despised.⁷⁸

I own a God, immortal, boundless, wise,
 Who bid our glories of creation rise;

.

⁷⁶ Goldsmith, p. 101.

⁷⁷ Walpole, *Letters*, vol. V, p. 210.

⁷⁸ Chatterton, vol. I, p. 121.

Who saw religion a fantastic night,
 But gave us reason to obtain the light.
 Indulgent Whitfield scruples not to say,
 He only can direct to heaven's high-way;
 While bishops with as much vehémençe tell,
 All sects heterodox are food for hell.
 While then, dear Smith, since doctors disagree,
 Their notions are not oracles to me:
 What I think right I ever will pursue,—
 And leave you liberty to do so too.⁷⁹

James Beattie, whose *Minstrel* (1771-4) has all the "symptoms" of romanticism and yet is scarcely a romantic poem, shows clearly the close connection between radicalism and the romantic spirit:

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
 That a poor villager inspires my strain;
 With thee let Pageantry and Power abide:
 The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign;
 Where thro' wild groves at eve the lonely swain
 Enraptur'd roams, to gaze on Nature's charms:
 They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
 The parasite their influence never warms,
 Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.⁸⁰

Then comes the deluge. Every romantic writer is to some extent at least, a radical, cursing tyranny in its various forms, or weeping over the woes of the poor:

" 'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
 Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume;
 And we are weeds without it."⁸¹

"Fled are those times when, in harmonious strains,
 The rustic poet praised his native plains.
 No shepherds now, in smooth alternate verse,
 Their country's beauty or their nymph's rehearse;
 Yet still for these we frame the tender strain,
 Still in our lays fond Corydons complain,
 And shepherds' boys their amorous pains reveal,
 The only pains, alas! they never feel."⁸²

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁸⁰ *The Minstrel*, Book I, Canto IV.

⁸¹ Cowper, *Task*, Book V, ll. 446 ff.

⁸² Crabbe, vol. I, p. 120.

"Yet grant them health, 'tis not for us to tell,
 Though the head droops not, that the heart is well;
 Or will you praise that homely, healthy fare,
 Plenteous and plain, that happy peasants share?
 Oh! trifle not with wants you cannot feel,
 Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal—
 Homely, not wholesome; plain, not plenteous; such
 As you who praise would never deign to touch."⁸³

"The wretch that would a *tyrant* own,
 And the wretch, his true-born brother,
 Who would set the *Mob* aboon the *Throne*,
 May they be damn'd together!
 Who will not sing 'God save the King,'
 Shall hang as high's the steeple;
 But while we sing 'God save the King'
 We'll ne'er forget 'THE PEOPLE!' "⁸⁴

The Chimney Sweeper

"And because I am happy and dance and sing,
 They think they have done me no injury,
 And are gone to praise God and his priest and king,
 Who make up a heaven of our misery."⁸⁵

The Little Vagabond

"Dear mother, dear mother, the Church is cold;
 But the Alehouse is healthy, and pleasant, and warm.
 Besides, I can tell where I am used well;
 The poor parsons with wind like a blown bladder swell.

But, if at the Church they would give us some ale,
 And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,
 We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,
 Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray."⁸⁶

And so we might go on through the list of romantic and semi-romantic poets, finding the radical spirit more and more manifest, religious radicalism gaining ground rapidly in the later years of the period, until in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, as Miss Scudder says, literature "is not Christian; indeed it is barely cognizant of Christianity,"⁸⁷ while

⁸³ Crabbe, vol. I, p. 124.

⁸⁴ Burns, vol. III, p. 273.

⁸⁵ Blake, p. 103.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁸⁷ Scudder, p. 117.

political radicalism is everywhere pervasive, or almost everywhere, in romantic literature.

In Shelley political radicalism went to the extreme:

Nature rejects the monarch, not the man;
 The subject, not the citizen: for kings
 And subjects, mutual foes, for ever play
 A losing game into each other's hands,
 Whose stakes are vice and misery. The man
 Of virtuous soul commands not, nor obeys.
 Power, like a desolating pestilence,
 Pollutes whate'er it touches; and obedience,
 Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth,
 Makes slaves of men, and, of the human frame,
 A mechanized automaton.⁸⁸

The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
 Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man'
 Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
 Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
 Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man
 Passionless; no, yet free from guilt or pain.⁸⁹

In Shelley and Byron the sister radicalism found its most emphatic expression:

A droll story is told us among others of Jesus Christ having driven a legion of Devils into a herd of pigs, who were so discomfited with these new invaders that they all threw themselves over a precipice into the lake, and were drowned. These were a set of hypochondriacal and high-minded swine, very unlike any others of which we have authentic record; they disdained to live, if they must live in so intimate a society with Devils, as that which was imposed on them, and the pig-drivers were no doubt confounded by so heroical a resolution.⁹⁰

The Vision of Judgment

I know this is unpopular; I know
 'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damned
 For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
 I know my catechism; I know we're crammed
 With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;

⁸⁸ Shelley, *Poetical Works*, vol. IV, p. 408: *Queen Mab*.

⁸⁹ Shelley, *Poetical Works*, Vol. II, p. 236: *Prometheus*.

⁹⁰ Shelley, *Prose Works*, vol. II, pp. 398-399.

I know that all save England's Church have shammed,
 And that the other twice two hundred churches
 And synagogues have made a *damned* bad purchase.'⁹¹

In Canto V, Stanzas xlviii and xlix of *Don Juan*, the materialistic radicalism of Byron comes very close to expressing the Marxian materialistic conception of history:

Some talk of an appeal unto some passion,
 Some to men's feelings, others to their reason;
 The last of these was never much the fashion
 For Reason thinks all reasoning out of season:
 Some speakers whine, and others lay the lash on,
 But more or less continue still to tease on,
 With arguments according to their 'forte;'
 But no one ever dreams of being short,—

But I disgress: of all appeals,—although
 I grant the power of pathos, and of gold,
 Of beauty, flattery, threats, a shilling,—no
 Method's more sure at moments to take hold
 Of the best feelings of mankind, which grow
 More tender, as we every day behold,
 Than that all-softening, overpowering knell,
 The Tocsin of the Soul—the dinner-bell.

In Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth radical impulses were checked by natural conservatism which brought in politics an almost complete facing about, in religion nothing more revolutionary than a kind of ecstatic pantheism springing up with a passionate love for nature. But Shelley and Byron were extremists; and because they were, we find their works of such significance today, when again the radical spirit seems gaining with such rapid strides, in the growth of the Socialistic party, the adoption of socialistic doctrines and expedients by other parties, and in the increase of liberal thought within the churches.

The spirit of radicalism is the spirit of reform. "The reformer is usually deep-dyed with that which he feels the need of reforming," remarks Bosanquet in his *History of Aesthetic*, and this was true of the reformers, literary and social, at the

⁹¹ Byron, *Poetry*, vol. IV, p. 492.

time of the Romantic Revolt. Although they attempted to break with the immediate past, it clung to them. Much of the romantic literature is marred by pseudo-classic phraseology; the radicalism of the Revolt is deep-dyed in eighteenth century abstractness and affectation—the very qualities characteristic of the opposition. Radicals played with social problems as with abstract mathematical propositions; consequently much of the declamation of romantic literature is mere rhetoric. Even the most sincere and ardent of the reformers—for instance, Shelley—were inspired by dreams of the Golden Age (which eighteenth century pastoralism had transmitted to them) instead of by grasp of concrete social problems. They saw more or less clearly what the matter was, but they wished to solve the problems kid-glove fashion, by educating the sensibilities of mankind until all oppressors should be too tender-hearted to oppress. Consistency did not much trouble them. Many were the golden-age moralists who were capable of spouting magniloquently about tyrants and slaves and inequalities, who could at the same time with little compunction draw their rents regularly and lead lives of leisure or unpractical activity. Even Shelley, sincere and generally consistent as he was, preferred to elevate the masses from a distance, had sensibilities and tastes too acute and aristocratic to permit him to mingle freely with his kind, accepted his inheritance and kept a large part of it in spite of his philanthropic schemes, and never earned (to the best of my recollection of his life-story) a shilling by manual labor. Sentimentalism kept the romanticists from practicality, from facing the issues squarely. There is much truth in Arnold's dictum that Shelley was a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain. It was against these very qualities of abstractness and aloofness plus the consequent utopian cast of characters and plot-resolutions that the realists of a later period rebelled.

Before closing our survey of radicalism we should note that the right wing of the religious movement did not contribute much directly to the movement in literature, yet it certainly helped to create the materials which nourished, and the spirit

that vivified the Romantic Revolt. Besides advancing individualism and humanitarian reform, Methodism, particularly, assisted in bringing into prominence the lower strata of society, a task to which, it is worthy of remark, the Salvation Army succeeded in later times. Furthermore, Methodism and Evangelicism were attempts to revive the piety of an earlier period, and in so far they stimulated historical study and the revival of interest in more primitive times—a revival of interest which has been regarded by some students as the mainspring of the Romantic Revolt.

3. REBELLION AGAINST THE COMMONPLACE

(A) *Naturalism*

By naturalism I mean love of that which we usually designate as external nature, and love of nature in man and man in nature, as distinguished from the artificial in man and man in society.

Both of these loves are native to Englishmen, and the former in an especial degree; but for a considerable period circumstances conspired to throttle the expression of either. The importation on the part of town literateurs of a foreign spirit, and the imposition of a pseudo-classical stamp in the attempt to purify the literature, somewhat effectually crushed out interest in nature for its own sake, and interest in that class of mankind closest to nature which had, in the literature of the seventeenth century, been treated even though humorously at least sympathetically. But under the domination of pseudo-classicism nature and the common people were fastidiously or superciliously ignored, or treated with contempt or gross condescension, as with Smollett and Fielding, and manners—and those, too, of the most artificial class of society—became the absorbing theme. It is true that pastorals were put forth from time to time by eighteenth century writers, but they, when not outrageous burlesques, were hollow and insincere performances.

Real love of nature, however, was still awake, and still found expression, as in a letter of Walpole written in 1739:

But the road, West, the road! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded with others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines, or lost in clouds! Below, a torrent breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rock! Sheets of cascades forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage! This sounds too bombastic and too romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has. If I could send you my letter post between two lovely tempests that echoed each other's wrath, you might have some idea of this noble roaring scene, as you were reading it.⁹³

Industrial causes were at work to release the love of nature from that which held it back, and when once released it not only followed its natural course with increased speed, but swept out in a mighty flood that penetrated farther and reached higher than it would, had its course not been stayed by pseudo-classicism and the overthrow of the cause of the common people (including the middle class) at the time of the Restoration.

As with the other movements thus far considered, we may attribute a good deal of the credit for this particular movement to the growth of industrial cities. If we examine the early manifestations of the Romantic Revolt, we shall find that the artificiality, the complexity, the patent fraud and wretched poverty, the contrasting conditions of rich and poor, seem to have turned the thoughts of the dissatisfied townsman to country life as ideal. Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, though savoring of pastoralism to such a degree that it suffered the contempt of the realistic Crabbe, found an echo in many a heart weary of city life. This town-weariness is pervasive in the days of the Revolt proper.⁹⁴

⁹³ Walpole, *Letters*, vol. I, p. 38.

⁹⁴ Expressions of it are very common, but I shall give two specimens:

I sit and gaze
With lingering eye, till dreaming Fancy makes
The lovely landscape live, and the rapt soul
From the foul haunts of herded human-kind
Flies far away with spirit speed, and tastes
The untainted air that with the lively hue
Of health and happiness illumines the cheek
Of mountain Liberty.

(Southey, *Poetical Works*, vol. II, pp. 218-219; *On a Landscape of Gaspar Poussin*; 1795).

We have here a condition somewhat analogous to that of our own time. We observe that today while there is a master-current setting cityward, a current draining the farms of their young men, there is also a back current. The city man is looking toward the country as the land of his desire. The latter current has not its origin so much in practical desire as the former, although the greater security and stability of country life attract the resident of the city. The movement is esthetic, rather, and sentimental in its nature. The esthetic preference for the beauty of the country, and the "simple life" is wide spread among those who prefer the city as a place of residence. In the eighteenth century this sentimental rather than practical or sincere desire for the simple life found expression in sentimental exaltation of poverty. Poverty appears to have been looked upon, even by those who suffered it, as preferable to luxury.⁹⁵ In such poetry poverty in the country is represented as preferable because it is surrounded with natural beauty, and, best of all, because it has, if it be not too severe (such as that delineated in Crabbe, for instance) what the city has not and never can have, tranquility. The townsman, furthermore, who has been bred in the country (and he was in large number when the industrial revolution was compelling the abandonment of village life) returns to the country in thought with longing, or in reality with delight. The artist who felt this longing or delight and could fittingly express it struck a popular chord—Goldsmith, for example, or Thomson. Even Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*, although their form and themes were well fitted to excite ridicule, sold with some readiness.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart.

(Wordsworth, *Lines . . . Tintern Abbey*).

Wordsworth's *The Reverie of Poor Susan* is a tribute to those who divorced from their native rustic birthplace had not forgotten it.

⁹⁵ See Burn's *Cottar's Saturday Night*.

Patten makes an interesting, though at first glance apparently far-fetched assertion, that the lung trouble incident to indoor confinement of industrial nature, caused a movement from city to country.⁹⁶ While the existence of such a movement would probably be hard to prove, we may at least logically suppose that the known benefits of "fresh air" would cause the delights of the country to be dwelt upon by those in need of it, whether they had the means to gratify their desire or not. Perhaps Patten's remark was suggested by Goldsmith's line, "There the pale artist plies the sickly trade."

It has already been pointed out how through the industrial revolution, and particularly through the improvement in the means of transportation, the city and country came into closer contact.⁹⁷ City culture spread to the country, and the country in its more agreeable aspects became better known to the city man. With the rise in culture of the country, the literary market began to have a demand from a new source—from the hitherto ridiculed country itself.⁹⁸ It is my theory, though again one hard to establish, that this demand acted upon the nature of the literature, influencing it in the choice of subject-matter.

The return to nature represents, I am persuaded, in some measure a regret for the passing of wildness or semi-wildness from the agricultural districts of England.⁹⁹ Yet nowhere in

⁹⁶ Patten, pp. 351-352.

⁹⁷ Improvements in clothing and dwellings, moreover, soon took away all advantages of city residence over country in point of comfort.

⁹⁸ Coleridge testifies (1816) to the spread of education in the country and the demand in the country for literature of the radical and, possibly, romantic sort: "The powers that awaken and foster the spirit of curiosity are to be found in every village: books are in every hovel. The infant's cries are hushed with picture-books: and the cottager's child sheds his first bitter tears over pages, which render it impossible for the man to be treated or governed as a child." (Vol. I, p. 443).

⁹⁹ "Indeed, all the elements seemed to have conspired against the peasant, for aesthetic taste, which might at other times have restrained, in the eighteenth century encouraged the destruction of the commons and their rough beauty. The rage for order and symmetry and neat cultivation was universal." (Hammond, p. 40).

"The face of the country was being altered. Enclosure brought the hedges and hedgerows that transformed our rural scenery to the familiar

the romantic literature have I observed any very outspoken rebellion against enclosure or any dwelling with great delight upon the beauties of commons and wastes. Regret, however, is frequently voiced by Wordsworth for the great changes which rustic scenes are undergoing; and it is significant that the poets selected for residence those parts of the country which had suffered least alteration. Perhaps for that very reason we hear little of those changes—they were not continually obtruded upon the poets' notice. Furthermore, the radical spirit, the revolutionary spirit, the spirit of youth, which delight in change, were in the air, and counteractive. Pervasive optimism, expectation on tip-toe, stifles regret.¹⁰⁰

It is worthy of remark in passing that possibly—we might well say surely—the improvement of roads and means of transportation in increasing vacational travel and increasing the comfort and safety of travel, increased appreciation of nature. Wild nature is not likely to be particularly attractive to any but the hardy adventurer and enthusiast when it offers an abundance of discomforts, hardships, and dangers along with its beauty. The cheapening of the means of transportation is also an im-

aspect of to-day—a land no longer open, but a variegated mosaic of squares and oblongs, varying in size and pattern and product, that to the unfamiliar eye suggest an unending series of gardens, on which the towns stealthily encroach." (Robertson, p. 343).

¹⁰⁰ Changes wide, and deep, and silently performed,
This Land shall witness; and as days roll on,
Earth's universal frame shall feel the effect;
Even till the smallest habitable rock,
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
Of humanized society.

(*The Excursion*, Book IX).

All to you
Is dark and cheerless: you in this fair world
See some destroying principle abroad,—

Oh, my friend,
That thy faith were as mine! That thou couldst see
Death still producing life, and evil still
Working its own destruction! couldst behold
The strifes and troubles of this troubled world
With that strong eye that sees the promised day
Dawn through this night of tempest.

(Southey, *Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 235).

portant factor, for it meant an increase of opportunity for escape from the city.¹⁰¹

But perhaps industrialism contributed to the increase of the love of nature as much through advancing individualism as in any other way. The breaking-down of the social organization brought the individual to the fore, yet at the same time threw him back upon himself. But it is only the exceptional individual—if indeed there are any such—who can find ultimate satisfaction merely in the assertion of his own individuality. Individualism with its perpetual self-concentration is sure to become tiresome even to itself. The average man, at least, cannot find repose solely in himself; he could not at that time find it in the political, social, and ecclesiastical systems under fire from the radicals and manifestly inadequate to the new industrial England. How was individualism to escape from itself? We may at once name three ways: by losing itself in religious enthusiasm; by turning its attention to the picturesque of the past and of the foreign, or the hitherto undiscovered picturesque in the commonplace; by turning its attention to nature.¹⁰² We have seen how the first method assisted Methodism; the third most assuredly assisted in the development of naturalism. In all the greatest nature-poets of the Romantic Revolt individualism was highly developed, and in most of them, because of the lack of balancing qualities, the bane of individualism—the melancholy of excessive introspection—appears.

¹⁰¹ How common travel for the purpose of visiting the wonders of natural scenery had become by 1818 we may gather from Keats' account of his journey into Scotland.—*Letters*, pp. 136 to 144.

¹⁰² One thinks at once of Byron when he reads the following:

Full often wished he that the winds might rage
When they were silent; far more fondly now
Than in his earlier season did he love
Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds
That live in darkness. From his intellect
And from the stillness of abstracted thought
He asked repose.

(*The Excursion*, Book I).

My apology for quoting so often from the *Excursion* is that while to many that poem seems largely prosy pedantry, it has to me proved a mine of philosophy and criticism of the Romantic Revolt.

Naturalism embraces man in nature and nature in man. Throughout the period of the Revolt we notice that the lower levels of society are coming more and more into view, and are more and more made subjects for literary treatment. This we have already accounted for in accounting for other movements; sentimentalism and the humanitarian awakening calling attention to the poor (whose increasing discontent reacted upon the two); individualism placing emphasis upon the *individual* poor; and radicalism dispensing doctrines of brotherhood and preaching the return to nature, which now meant external nature untouched by man, now the nature of man himself unspoiled by the artificialities of society. The love of external nature conspired with these to arouse interest in nature in man and man in nature by calling attention to the man least artificial.¹⁰³ Nature was in eighteenth century literature, but conventionalized; so was the man closest to nature, but conventionalized. Now that man closest to nature was becoming *real*, necessarily nature became real along with him. The converse was equally true; but, except in Burns, who was himself if not of the peasantry at least closely allied with it, nowhere, as I recall, do we meet in the literature of the Revolt sympathetic and at the same time intimate treatment of the poor. The nearest approach we get in Crabbe and Wordsworth, but their lack of intimacy and sympathy can easily be estimated by contrast with Burns

103

It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved;—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
(Wordsworth, *Michael*).

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity. . . .
(Wordsworth, *Lines . . . Tintern Abbey*).

or the common-folk literature of a later time. Contrast, for instance, Wordsworth's *Michael* with Burn's *Cottar's Saturday Night*. In the latter there is sympathy with intimacy; in the former, while the treatment is sympathetic, the pathos genuine, we never forget that Michael is a peasant, the writer a gentleman who regards him somewhat condescendingly, and in very much the same fashion in which a painter regards his model. In short, the writers of the Romantic Revolt are, in general, not of the oppressed class with which they would fain sympathize, not brothers of the peasants, but individuals entirely apart. The Romantic Revolt was pre-eminently naturalistic in its love of external nature, but it was too fond of abstract generalities to make great advances in the field of nature in man and man in nature, which has been fruitfully exploited by later writers.

(B) *Emphasis upon the remote*

By emphasis upon the remote is here meant emphasis upon the remote in time and place—the display of interest in the strange and picturesque, the exotic, and particularly the medieval. Almost all that need be said under this head has been said incidentally in one way or another in the preceding pages; what follows is principally in the way of amplification, summary, or enforcement.

Dwelling upon the remote was another means of escape, correlative with nature, from the excessive individualism which the new order of society (an order to which that society was yet far from fully adjusting itself) entailed. The impulse to turn to the remote in order to get away from self is dramatic in character, being objective; but the result with the romantic individualists was usually a projection of self into all forms of the remote: wherever they turned they met themselves—theirs the mood of cold, lonely, proud, snowy peak, theirs the peace of the mountain-girt vale, the turbulent, lawless passion of the brigand, the voluptuous delights of the oriental, theirs the ruin symbolized by the crumbling tower. Byron at once occurs to

our minds as typical in this lyricising of materials selected for their dramatic value. The age was in many respects an age of youth (due largely to the exhilaration of industrial and social change)—too much impressed and oppressed by the wonder of its own being to be objective and furnish the proper time-spirit for the production of drama.

Again, the dry light of a commercial, practical, and consequently excessively scientific age—for that is what in the main it was in spite of all the rebellion against it—was not wholly attractive to those of poetic temperament; hence, the escape imaginatively or really of the poetically inclined into regions more congenial. Nor did the social conditions of the time, with its restlessness and squalid or Philistine ugliness, meet the demands of the imaginative and emotional natures.¹⁰⁴ The appearance of the remote as the pervading material of literature is an expression of revolt.

In the remote the imagination found relief from the growing complexity and perplexity of modern life. It is not necessary

¹⁰⁴ Wordsworth's sonnet beginning "The world is too much with us" is possibly the strongest expression to be found in English romantic literature of the dislike for a commercialized society. The occurrence of that expression of dislike in company with that of preference for early Greek imaginative naïveté is suggestive of the connection between the commercialization of society and the paganism of such poets as Keats and Landor. See also Coleridge's *Lay Sermons* for forcible expressions of dislike for the commercial spirit.

To have no cares
That eat the heart, no wants that to the earth
Chain the reluctant spirit, to be freed
From forced communion with the selfish tribe
Who worship Mammon,—yea, emancipate
From this world's bondage, even while the soul
Inhabits still its corruptible clay,—
Almost, ye dwellers in this holy house,
Almost I envy you. You never see
Pale Misery's asking eye, nor roam about
Those huge and hateful haunts of crowded men.

(Southey, *Written after visiting the convent of Arrubida, near Setubal*).

—A country like the United States, whose greatest Men are Franklins and Washingtons will never do that [take up the human intellect where England leaves off]. They are great Men doubtless, but how are they to be compared to those our countrymen Milton and the two Sydneys? The one is a philosophical Quaker full of mean and thrifty maxims, the other sold the very Charger who had taken him through all his Battles. Those Americans are great, but they are not sublime Man—the humanity of the United States can never reach the sublime.—(Keats, *Letters*, p. 175).

to repeat here what I have said concerning the desire for the simple life. In the contemplation of the simplicity real or imagined of primitive or more imaginative times, and consequent apparent dignity and stability, the mind perplexed by changes and the multiplicity of new problems found itself emancipated from the petty, refreshed.¹⁰⁵

The remote was a welcome means of escape for yet another reason. The material progress of the eighteenth century and the intellectual progress accompanying and reciprocal had aroused in sentimental humanitarians and sanguine radicals hopes too wild to be other than mistaken. When the reaction set in, when it became evident that the problems of the ages were not to be solved at once and for all time, all but the most sanguine mired in the Slough of Despond.¹⁰⁶ The Solitary of *The Excursion* is the type of such. For those of his temper the land of dreams—better, the land of faery, the supernatural, the

¹⁰⁵ Modern poets differ from the Elizabethans in this: each of the moderns like an Elector of Hanover governs his petty state and knows how many straws are swept daily from the Causeways in all his dominions, and has a continual itching that all the Housewives should have their coppers well scoured: The ancients were Emperors of vast Provinces, they had only heard of the remote ones and scarcely cared to visit them.—(Keats, *Letters*, p. 68).

¹⁰⁶

For that other loss,
The loss of confidence in social man,
By the unexpected transports of our age
Carried so high, that every thought, which looked
Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind
To many seemed superfluous—as, no cause
Could e'er for such exalted confidence
Exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:

‘Vain-glorious Generation! what new powers
On you have been conferred? What gifts, withheld
From your progenitors, have ye received
Fit recompense of new desert? what claim
Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees
For you shall undergo a sudden change;
And the weak functions of one busy day,
Reclaiming and extirpating, perform
What all the slowly-moving years of time,
With their united force, have left undone?’

(*The Excursion*, Book IV).

To be sure, this despondence was in part due to failure in the political field; but, as I have endeavored to show, the political struggle as the international struggles were mainly and at bottom economic.

frankly impossible—would be a grateful refuge, if for the time it could exclude disappointment and discontent. That land of dreams, however, which was reached through the gate of the antique was dangerous ground, provocative of fresh romantic melancholy.¹⁰⁷

But those of most sanguine temper—the Shelleys of the time—most imbued with the “noble restlessness” of youth, easily recuperating or not so easily discouraged, dreaming of a glorious future when the powers of evil should be overthrown in the march of mind conquering the material world, projected themselves into that future, but when in most sanguine mood took delight in dwelling upon the past and the wrecks with which mutability had strewed it. From the past they gathered inspira-

¹⁰⁷ Sometimes in youthful years,
When in some ancient ruin I have stood,
Alone and musing, till with quiet tears
I felt my cheek bedewed,
A melancholy thought hath made me grieve
For this our age, and humbled me in mind,
That it should pass away, and leave
No monuments behind.

Not for themselves alone
Our fathers lived; nor with a niggard hand
Raised they the fabrics of enduring stone,
Which yet adorn the land:
Their piles, memorials of the mighty dead,
Survive them still, majestic in decay;
But ours are like ourselves, I said,
The creatures of a day.

(Southey, *Stanzas*).

—thus I entertain
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased
To skim along the surfaces of things,
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.
But if the spirit be oppressed by sense
Of instability, revolt, decay,
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of Nature
And her blind helper Chance, do *then* suffice
To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
Not less than that huge Pile (from some abyss
Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round and round
Eddying within its vast circumference,
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid
Of Egypt . . .

(*The Excursion*, Book III).

tion; corroding change was an evidence that the present evils could not endure always. Shelley's *Ozymandias* expresses to perfection this spirit.

Wide-spread discontent with the present and regret for the passing of a long established social order played its part in stimulating the passion for the remote; the "good old times" were seen through a delightful haze of romance.¹⁰⁸ There were three elements at least of the population to which the vanishing past would especially appeal: The cavalier, the labor, and the conservative. (1) The cavalier element was wedded to traditions of class and family glory, to ideals of chivalry and gallantry which the new order was overturning or threatening. Class pride naturally throws itself back upon precedent, looks back upon a historical or legendary past for the maintenance of its position.¹⁰⁹ (2) As we have seen, the labor element was dissatisfied, and was seeking to re-establish medieval trade conditions.¹¹⁰ During the Romantic Revolt the leaders of the radical revolt—the sentimental philosophers and the utopian socialists—drew many of their ideals, in accordance with which they sought to re-establish society, from the past—particularly the legendary past; for the abstractness of their theorizing required little more than a hazy notion of the course of history, and legend and myth served as well as historical fact for illus-

¹⁰⁸ "It is melancholy to think with how much more fondness and pride the writers of those days contemplated whatever was belonging to *Old England*. People now in praising any scene or event snarl all the while, and attack their neighbors for not praising. They feel a consciousness that the foundations of our greatness are impaired, and have occasioned a thousand little cracks and crevices to let in the cold air upon our comforts. Ah, Nassau and Oliver!—*Quis vobis tertius haeres?*" (Landor, vol. I, p. 15, Letter to Southey, 1811).

¹⁰⁹ The existence of such a class encourages general interest in historical study.

¹¹⁰ It is of interest to note in this connection that the labor movement today owes much of its inspiration to medievalism. The socialist is fond of pointing to the fact that apparently in general the condition of the common people under medieval communism was much more comfortable, stable, and, among the higher artisans, much more conducive to the cultivation of the higher faculties—imagination and taste—than the present condition, with its mechanical processes and its highly developed division of labor. Here, clearly, the radicalism of today is directly connected with romanticism.

trative purposes. (3) And, in addition, the very excesses to which radicalism went in seeking to break down the established social system, occasioned an equally passionate clinging to traditions and ideals of the past on the part of conservatives of all social classes.

The interest in the past thus stimulated in various ways into a passion found much to gratify it. Antiquarians had been busy gathering memorials of bygone times. Archaeology received much attention during the period under discussion. Herculaneum was discovered in 1709; excavations upon its site were commenced in 1738; and the Pompeiian researches from 1755 onward gave great impetus to historical and esthetic study.¹¹¹ Modern philology under the leadership of Wolf¹¹² had added impetus to historical research and exploration by its successes in showing the development and significance of classical art, and the relations of the life of classical antiquity to modern life. Says Bosanquet:

From 1751 onwards the activity of Englishmen was directed to making known the monuments of Greece proper; and the labours and publications of many explorers between that date and the early years of the present century no doubt marked and swelled the rising tide of interest which made it possible for Lord Elgin to conceive and carry out (in 1812) the idea of securing the Parthenon marbles.¹¹³

Is it cause for wonder that the poets and romancers seized upon this mass of historical material for the purpose of satisfying the desires of an age dissatisfied with its present and cherishing traditions of its past? Was it any wonder that the romanticists guided by accurate knowledge of Greek life and spirit as well as by emotional insight and sincerer sentiment should refine the pseudo-classicism of their predecessors into a romantic-classicism, such as that of Keats and Landor? Pseudo-classicism in attempting to regain classicism had departed from it; romanticism succeeded in regaining some elements of classicism and

¹¹¹ Bosanquet, p. 192.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

mingled its own elements with them. How far a cry it is from Homer's naive simplicity in Book VI of the *Odyssey* (wherein it is represented that Nausicaa goes washing) to Pope's gaudy and stilted translation of the same:

Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins
Shine in her hand: along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a b  vy of bright damsels shone.¹¹⁴

Again, how far a cry from this to Landor's *The Hamadryad*:

HAMADRYAD.

Lovest thou well thy father's house?

RHAICOS.

Indeed

I love it, well I love it, yet would leave
For thine, whate'er it be, my father's house,
With all the marks upon the door, that show
My growth at every birth-day since the third,
And all the charms, o'erpowering evil eyes,
My mother nail'd for me against my bed,
And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)—
Won in my race last spring from Eutychos.¹¹⁵

Through Landor and Keats—to say nothing of later romanticists—English literature gains something of the noble simplicity of the Greeks—a simplicity suffused, however, with the warmth of romantic passion.

It is not at all remarkable that in such an age the revival of ballad literature (through the efforts of Percy, Ritson, and others), with all its historical, medieval, primitive associations, met with general favor; that Teutonic and Celtic myth and legend should appear in the songs of Collins and Gray, and their successors in romanticism all the way down to the master of such myth and legends, Morris; that the far-off lands of Alladin should be sought for new mines of sensational theme (by Moore and Southey, for instance); and that even such sham medievalism as is to be found in the *Otranto* should create a furor. Medievalism, originating apparently as an amusement solely,

¹¹⁴ Chalmers, vol. XIX, p. 193.

¹¹⁵ Landor, vol. VII, p. 424.

became a serious occupation because it found the proper *milieu* prepared for it. Had conditions not been ripe for it, Walpole's work would not have made so great an impression. It is with works of literature as with other things asking for public consideration or favor—they have their “psychological moments.” In itself *Otranto* has little merit, but as coming at the proper time definitely to inaugurate a movement it is of great importance in the history of literature; yet one is not unwarranted in saying that, the times being what they were, if Walpole's work had not inaugurated the movement, nevertheless the movement would have been inaugurated.

To the rise of interest in the remote, and particularly to the rise of interest in the medieval, we can attribute much of the interest in nature; and, again, from the interest in nature came much of the interest in the medieval. The relation is reciprocal. Ruins by their affinity with wild unspoiled nature came to be regarded almost as natural objects; wild nature by its associations with the relics of the past provoked affection from the sentimental dweller upon the past.¹¹⁶

Besides furnishing new materials for artistic manipulation, the interest in the remote worked powerfully upon the form of art. The romanticist in his strain after the novel, the quaint, the exotic, would not fail to secure these effects of surprise by varying his art form. The quaintness or picturesqueness of subject-matter demanded a quaint or picturesque setting. If, as in Coleridge's *Christabel*, the form supposed to be a new invention proved to be really nothing new, yet since it was not familiar to the reading public of the day, it served its purpose—to give an impression of strangeness.

¹¹⁶ The ivy shuns the city wall,
Where busy-clamorous crowds intrude,
And climbs the desolated hall
In silent solitude;
The time-worn arch, the fallen dome,
Are roots for its eternal home.

(John Clare, *To John Milton*, in Miles' *Poets and Poetry of the Century*).

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS

Romanticism did not end with the end of the Revolt, and has not ended; doubtless it never will end. But it can never again be what it was, for the exact conditions which made it or permitted it to be what it was can never return again. The industrial revolution has long since been completed, or at least industrialism has become the established order, to which all classes of society have become fairly well adapted; the consciousness that the present order is a *new* order has almost ceased to exist. To the fervor and anticipation of youth mingled with the retrospection and regret of old age has succeeded the cool or cynical or melancholy sanity and prose of middle age. The fact that the present industrial regime has become comparatively fixed, but that the class struggle still goes on, has had a profound effect upon literature.

It is a commonplace that the most conspicuous writers of the Romantic Revolt are poets. Compared with them the prose writers of that period take second, if not third rank. But with the death of Byron, which we may accept as the culminating point of the Revolt in all its phases, the sovereignty in the field of letters begins to pass away from the poets. To be sure, Victorian literature has its great poets—two of them master poets; but poetry no longer is inspired to so great an extent by humanitarian themes; it is occupied rather with special problems of the individual human soul, with little reference to those great social problems affecting the whole of humanity. On its formal side romantic poetry was brought practically to perfection by Tennyson, but in him the passion of his predecessors in romanticism rarely shows. The Revolt had failed either of re-establishing the ideals of the past or of realizing its dreams of the future. Yet the Revolt in so far as it represented the middle class, had not failed. Apparently as a result, the middle class triumphs in the prose, and individualism, the middle-class social philosophy,

triumphs in the poetry. The greater novelists of the early Victorian period, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, however humanitarian in their tendencies, were representative of the middle class, were inspired in the main by middle-class ideals, and depicted by preference middle-class society. In the realm of poetry comparatively minor poets—Elliott, Mrs. Browning, Hood, and Morris, for instance—sing the woes of the poor and the aspirations of the proletariat. But with the advent of Carlyle distinctively social themes surge to the front once more, and *Sartor Resartus* is prophetic of the channels along which the main current of thought is to move for a generation or two. In Carlyle's grumbling once more the storm of indignation of artist and laborer against the brutality and ugliness of the social organization and social trappings makes itself heard. The impassioned literary prose essay with its invective against industrialism in one form or another marks a continuance of the old radical spirit, a spirit no longer contaminated with abstract aloofness, though often obsessed by impractical schemes of reform, or oppressed by a sense of inability to do more than suggest means of alleviation. Radicalism has now an intimate, a sympathetic, and a stern grasp of the facts; but its expedients are still the expedients of sentimentalists. Chartism expected equal suffrage to prove the panacea of poverty; Christian Socialists advocated voluntary abandonment of competition; Carlyle told men to select their heroes and yield themselves to the guidance of those heroes.

To recapitulate, the spirit of radicalism, beginning in the revolt in impassioned poetry (in *Prometheus Unbound*, for instance), sank into impassioned prose (in the great Victorian essayists, Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold); and, we may add, from thence emerged in scientific or semi-scientific prose (e. g., Marx's *Capital*) that makes little or no pretension to be belles lettres.

Now let us notice the courses of the other movements which we have been considering. Humanitarianism, we note, is marching triumphantly on, becoming, however—so it appears to me—both more socialistic and scientific in its nature. Emphasis is

increasingly placed upon the social effects of poverty, crime, overwork, and unsanitary living, and the causes and cures for social evils are being sought scientifically.

Sentimentalism is still with us, and serves to lead humanitarians into new or little trodden paths. It is in large measure accountable for our game laws, even our forest preservation, for vegetarian cults, and societies for prevention of cruelty. Sentimentalism of nowadays is chiefly to be distinguished from humanitarianism in the reasons which it advances, or which underlie its activity; it is distinguished from the sentimentalism of the eighteenth century by being in general more sincere, more seldom professed solely for the sake of diversion, and by issuing in outward practical activity.

Religious radicalism has come to the fore again in various revivals tending to the democratization of religion, particularly in the establishment of the Salvation Army and kindred organizations by which an attempt is made to inspire the lower levels of society—to which the longer established and aristocratic church organizations pay little heed—with religious enthusiasm, and to uplift them by practical humanitarian activity.

Individualism is still triumphant, for the industrial conditions and the dominating class still demand its triumph; but it is not triumphant in the way its early advocates expected. The dreamers of the Revolt thought that through securing individual freedom, all could be secured. The individualism they contemplated was that of an anarchical community in which each would co-operate for the good of all. But the application of this doctrine of individual freedom did not bring the desired result. A few it made comparatively free, but it left the remainder more or less under control of the few and at their mercy. The failure to realize its aspirations killed the Revolt, as a revolt, although it did not kill romanticism. But the wild apocalyptic flights of romanticism were over. The prophecies of Shelley and Godwin were no longer believed. Political idealism had failed. Romantic poetry could no longer draw sustenance from dreams of a near approaching millennium. The excessive individualism developed

during the period of revolt tried to ignore the stern limitations upon man of conditions within his own and external nature. But ignoring the hard facts of life did not in the end make the facts the less hard. The new industrial regime went on establishing itself. Utopian individualism finally fell back exhausted from the impossible task of storming the breastwork of evil, and lay down in the ditch of despair. Upon a period of optimism and belief in the freedom of man's will succeeded a period of pessimism and fatalism.

Naturalism during the days of the revolt made great advance in appreciation of external nature, and some advance in appreciation of nature in man and man in nature. Eighteenth century pastoralism was neither romantic nor "real." It was merely artificial. Compared with it the country types and country life portrayed by the romanticists were far more real. But it remained for a later age, an age of disillusionment, with its realism in revolt against the abstractness of romanticism, its organized proletariat acquiring a dignified place in the public consciousness, to make a far greater advance, not only in the portrayal of country life and types, but in the delineation of the types and life of those "barricadoed evermore" within the walls of cities. Because of their painstaking exactness, however, and their eternally scientific attitude the realists have the faculty for perceiving "natural magic" or of expressing it little developed; in appreciation of external nature we apparently fall far behind the great romanticists.

As for the passion for the remote, it persisted after the close of the Revolt, and still persists, in spite of the fact that about all phases of the remote have been pretty thoroughly worked. It had various manifestations: as in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, in art; as the Oxford Movement, in religion, with its dislike for cold reason and the "garish day;" and has influenced strongly various writers—notably Tennyson and Morris. Yet at the same time it became, except in so far as it contributed to Socialism, detached from practical life.

The romanticism of the Revolt—and here I am using the term

romanticism in a broad sense to cover all that is especially distinctive in the revolt as a whole—nourished within it the germs of its own decay. By its worship of the past, by its delight in legendary lore, it cultivated, as we have seen, an interest in history; and this interest, together with the growing scientific spirit and the free-thinking in religious matters, which the tremendous industrial upheaval stimulated excessively, brought about the death of political idealism and the birth of so-called scientific Socialism, which purports to be based upon science and the facts of history, unbiased by religious sentiment. Again, science, which the romanticist took to his heart as the enlightener and savior of mankind, shattered the romantic conception of nature. We have seen that with the romanticists the "Return to Nature" did not mean simply turning to external nature for esthetic enjoyment, but it meant a turning to instinct, to primary impulses of man's nature—as it was thought that in those realms nature was not hostile to man, but in the highest degree friendly. This return to nature it was that was to be made through reason—which was correspondingly exalted. But this very reason, in science, whose import was not yet fully perceived, was destined to overthrow the very trust reposed in the beneficence of natural laws and impulses. Scientific reason said that nature was not pantheistic, cared nothing for man; that man was not ultimately perfectible, that he was not a fallen god but a brute fighting for his existence and making what progress adverse natural and artificial conditions permit; that romantic ideals were folly, and the types in which romanticists embodied those ideals "unreal." So science ushered in still more widely spread agnostic, atheistic, and materialistic pessimism; into political radicalism, scientific Socialism; into literature, realism.

The difference between the spirits of romanticism and utopian Socialism on the one hand and realism and scientific Socialism on the other is in part the difference between subjective idealism and determinism, between that philosophy which postulates freedom of the will and that (the philosophy of science) which

asserts the inevitableness of cause and effect. Romanticism, as embracing utopian Socialism, was fond of the altruistic assumption that man is capable of infinite improvement or ultimate perfection through appeal to a hypothetical universal altruistic instinct or impulse in his nature; realism, as carrying the postulate of science, may be altruistic or not; but if it is, it asserts that the condition of progress is selfish struggle for existence, that the greatest possibility of happiness for the individual and for society rests in the egoistic instinct properly appealed to. Altruism is reached through individualism in extreme form, through the self-interest at the basis of socialization. Selfishness, not unselfishness, is the basis and the bond of civilization. Man associates with his fellows not for their good, but for his own. Through a combination of the selfish struggle for possession and the voluntary association for the purpose of securing possession, the present social organization will at length break down, and a more equable distribution of property will result. This is, as I understand it, the fundamental doctrine of scientific Socialism, a Socialism which is the utopian Socialism of the romanticist transformed in the age of disillusionment, science, Philistinism which succeeded upon an age of enthusiasm and eager expectancy inspired by the conquest of man over nature.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

SECTION I

A. Works cited:

CESTRE, CHARLES.

La Révolution française et les poètes anglais. Paris, 1906.

ENGELS, FREDERICK.

Socialism, Utopian and Scientific (Trans. by E. Aveling). London, 1892.

GHENT, W. J.

Mass and Class. New York, 1904.

PEIXOTTO, J.

The French Revolution and Modern French Socialism. New York, 1901.

PHELPS, W. L.

The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement. Boston, 1893.

ROGERS, H. J.

Congress of Arts and Sciences, Universal Exposition, St. Louis, 1904. 8 vols. Boston and New York, 1905-1906.

SANTAYANA, GEORGE.

Reason in Art. New York, 1905.

SMITH, GOLDWIN.

Cowper. New York, 1880.

B. Other works consulted:

BEERS, H. A.

A History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century. London, 1906.

KIDD, BENJAMIN.

Social Evolution. New York and London, 1894.

LABRIOLA, ANTONIO.

Essais sur la conception matérialiste de l'histoire. Paris, 1902.

SECTION II

A. Works cited:

COLERIDGE, S. T.

Complete Works. 7 vols. New York, 1884.

HAMMOND, J. L., and BARBARA.

The Village Labourer. London, 1911.

HUTCHINS and HARRISON.

A History of Factory Legislation. Westminster, 1907.

LECKY, W. E. H.

A History of England in the Eighteenth Century. 8 vols. New York, 1878-1890.

MALTHUS, T. R.

An Essay on the Principle of Population. Ed. 7, London, 1872.

MARX, KARL.

Capital (Trans. by Moore and Aveling). New York, 1889.

ROBERTSON, C. GRANT.

England under the Hanoverians. London, 1911.

SLATER, GILBERT.

The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of the Common Fields.
London, 1907.

SMITH, ADAM.

An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.
3 vols. Philadelphia, 1789.

TRAILL, H. D.

Social England. 6 vols. New York and London, 1894-1897.

WEBB, SIDNEY AND BEATRICE.

The History of Trade Unionism. London, 1902.

YOUNG, ARTHUR.

A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Suffolk. London, 1797.

B. Other works consulted:

BONAR, JAMES.

Malthus and His Work. London, 1885.

COBBETT, WILLIAM.

Two-Penny Trash. London, 1831-1832.

GRAHAM, W.

Socialism New and Old. London, 1891.

HASBACH, W.

A History of the English Agricultural Labourer (Trans. by Ruth Kenyon). London, 1908.

HUNT AND POOLE.

The Political History of England. 12 vols. London, 1905-1910.

JONES, LLOYD.

The Life, Times, and Labours of Robert Owen. 2 vols in 1. London, 1890.

LEVY, HERMANN.

Large and Small Holdings (Trans. by Ruth Kenyon). Cambridge, 1911.

MACKAY, T.

The English Poor. London, 1889.

MORRIS AND BAX.

Socialism. London, 1896.

PODMORE, FRANK.

Robert Owen. 2 vols. London, 1906.

SOMBART, WERNER.

Socialism and the Social Movement in the Nineteenth Century.
New York and London, 1898.

VILLIERS, BROUGHAM.

The Socialist Movement in England. London, 1908.

WEBB, SIDNEY AND BEATRICE.

Industrial Democracy. London, 1902.

YOUNG, ARTHUR.

A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk. London, 1813.

SECTION III

A. Works cited:

BEATTIE, JAMES.

Poetical Works. Boston, 1866.

BERENS, L. H.

The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth. London, 1906.

BLAKE, WILLIAM.

Poetical Works. London, 1875.

BOSANQUET, BERNARD.

A History of Aesthetic. London, 1904.

BRANDES, GEORGE.

Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature. 6 vols. London, 1901-1905.

BURNS, ROBERT.

Works, W. S. Douglas, Ed. 6 vols. Edinburgh, 1895.

BYRON, LORD.

Works. 13 vols. London, 1901-1904.

CHALMERS, A.

Works of the English Poets. 21 vols. London, 1810.

CHATTERTON, THOMAS.

Poetical Works. 2 vols. London, 1891.

COLERIDGE, S. T.

See *ante*, IIA.

COLLINS, WILLIAM.

Poems. Boston, 1898.

COWPER, WILLIAM.

Poetical Works. New York, 1869.

CRABBE, GEORGE.

Poems. 3 vols. Cambridge, 1905-1907.

GOLDSMITH, OLIVER.

Miscellaneous Works. Edinburgh, 1867.

GRAY, THOMAS.

Works. 4 vols. London, 1884.

GREEN, J. R.

History of the English People. 4 vols. London, 1878-1880.

HAMMOND, J. L., AND BARBARA.

See *ante*, IIA.

HAZLITT, WILLIAM.

Collected Works. 12 vols. London and New York, 1902-1904.

KEATS, JOHN.

Letters. London and New York, 1891.

LANDOR, W. S.

Works and Life. 8 vols. London, 1874-1876.

LE BON, GUSTAVE.

The Psychology of Socialism. New York, 1899.

LECKY, W. E. H.

See *ante*, IIA.

LE ROSSIGNOL, J. E.

Orthodox Socialism. New York, 1907.

MARX, KARL.

See *ante*, IIA.

MILES, A. H.

The Poets and the Poetry of the Century. 10 vols. London, 1891-1897.

MILLAR, J. H.

The Mid-Eighteenth Century. Edinburgh and London, 1902.

PATTEN, S. N.

The Development of English Thought. New York and London, 1899.

PENNELL, E. R.

Life of Mary Wollstonecraft. Boston, 1884.

PHELPS, W. L.

See *ante*, IA.

RAUSCHENBUSCH-CLOUGH, E.

A Study of Mary Wollstonecraft. London, 1898.

ROBERTSON, C. GRANT.

See *ante*, IIA.

RUGGLES, THO.

The History of the Poor. 2 vols. London, 1793-1794.

SCHÄFFLE, A.

The Quintessence of Socialism. London, 1890.

SCUDDER, VIDA D.

Social Ideals in English Letters. Boston and New York, 1898.

SHELLEY, P. B.

Poetical Works. 4 vols. London, 1882.

Prose Works. 4 vols. London, 1880.

SOUTHEY, ROBERT.

Life of Wesley; and the Rise and Progress of Methodism. 2 vols. in 1. New York, 1820.

Poetical Works. 10 vols. Boston, 1864.

STEPHEN, LESLIE.

The English Utilitarians. 3 vols. London, 1900.

TRAILL, H. D.

See *ante*, IIA.

TRELAWNY, E. J.

Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron. London, 1906.

WALPOLE, HORACE.

The Letters of. 16 vols. Oxford, 1903-1905.

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM.

Poetical Works. 7 vols. London, 1892-1893.

B. Other works consulted:

CAINE, HALL.

Life of S. T. Coleridge. London, 1887.

COURTHOPE, W. J.

A History of English Poetry. 6 vols. New York and London, 1895-1910.

DOWDEN, EDWARD.

The French Revolution and English Literature. New York, 1897.

GODWIN, WILLIAM.

Enquiry Concerning Political Justice. 2 vols. London, 1796.

HERFORD, C. H.

The Age of Wordsworth. London, 1901.

HUNT, LEIGH.

Autobiography. London, 1885.

HUTTON, R. H.

Sir Walter Scott. New York, 1878.

JOHNSON, J.

Private Correspondence of William Cowper, Esq. Boston, 1824.

JONES, LLOYD.

See *ante*, IIB.

KIRKUP, THOMAS.

A History of Socialism. London, 1900.

LOCKHART, J. G.

Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott. 9 vols. in 3. Boston, 1861-1862.

MERZ, J. T.

A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century. 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1896-1912.

MINTO, WILLIAM.

The Literature of the Georgian Era. New York, 1895.

MITTON, G. E.

Jane Austen and Her Times. London, 1905.

MORRIS AND BAX.

See *ante*, IIB.

NOYES, A.

William Morris. London, 1908.

OLIPHANT, Mrs.

The Literary History of England in the Nineteenth Century. 3 vols. London, 1889.

PERRY, T. S.

English Literature in the Eighteenth Century. New York, 1883.

PODMORE, FRANK.

See *ante*, IIB.

RAMSAY, ALLEN.

Poems. 2 vols. London, 1800.

SEELEY, L. B.

Horace Walpole and His World. London, 1884.

SHAIRP, PRINCIPAL.

Robert Burns. New York, 1879.

SMEATON, OLIPHANT.

Allan Ramsay (Famous Scots Series. New York, 1896).

SOMBART, WERNER.

See *ante*, IIB.

STEPHEN, LESLIE.

A History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. 2 vols.
London, 1902.

English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century. Lon-
don, 1904.

VAUGHAN, C. E.

The Romantic Revolt. New York, 1907.

WARTON, THOMAS.

Poetical Works. 2 vols. Oxford, 1802.

WINCHESTER, C. T.

The Life of John Wesley. New York, 1906.

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM.

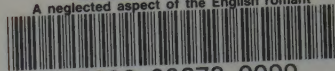
Prose Works. 3 vols. London, 1876.

3 5282 00278 0099

Gay R. Brown
Bookbinder
2930 South 18th St.
Pittsburgh 3, Pa.

Graduate

STACKS r PB13.C3 v.3 no.3
Richardson, George Francis,
A neglected aspect of the English romances



3 5282 00278 0099



P8-CZA-920

